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Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies 17-21 December

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SUPPLEMENT
Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies
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CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: As of 2 January 1991, television sourcelines in the DAILY REPORT will reflect how a station identifies itself. In most cases, this change eliminates the "Television Service" designation in favor of the station identification as broadcast. The presence of a new television sourceline reflects this change in policy, rather than the establishment of a new station or network.

An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies

Stenographic Record Production Described *[IZVESTIYA 26 Dec]* 1

17 December

PRAVDA Version of Gorbachev Opening Report *[18 Dec]* 1
TV Coverage of 17 December Opening Session *[cross-reference]* 11
Radio Coverage of 17 December Sessions *[cross-reference]* 11

18 December

Speeches from 18 Dec Sessions Reported *[IZVESTIYA 21 Dec]* 11
Radio Coverage of 18 Dec Sessions *[cross-reference]* 18

19 December

Speeches from Morning Session Reported *[IZVESTIYA 21 Dec]* 18
PRAVDA Carries Ryzhkov 19 Dec Speech *[20 Dec]* 22
Speeches From Afternoon Session Reported *[IZVESTIYA 22 Dec]* 27
PRAVDA Version of Nishanov Report on Treaty *[20 Dec]* 28
Radio Coverage of 19 Dec Session *[cross-reference]* 35

20 December

Speeches From 20 December Sessions Reported *[IZVESTIYA 22 Dec]* 35
Press Carries Shevardnadze Resignation Speech *[SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA 21 Dec]* 48
Gorbachev on Shevardnadze Resignation *[Moscow TV]* 49
Radio Coverage of 20 Dec Session *[cross-reference]* 51

21 December

Speeches From 21 December Morning Session *[IZVESTIYA 23 Dec]* 51
Radio Coverage of 21 Dec Sessions *[cross-reference]* 57

Stenographic Record Production Described

PM2712164990 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 26 Dec 90 Union Edition p 6

[Report by V. Konovalov under the "Behind the Scenes at the Congress" rubric: "In the Transfer From Spoken to Written Language"]

[Text] The stenographic report of the congress, which IZVESTIYA publishes, quite often provokes bewildered questions and even indignation from readers: Why does the text of certain speeches diverge from what they heard on radio and television? It would be possible simply to say that our newspaper publishes the official material of the congress' editorial and publishing apparatus, without changing even a comma. However, we offer readers our correspondent's report on how the apparatus that prepares deputies' speeches for publication operates.

We—a group of IZVESTIYA journalists and the congress' editorial and publishing apparatus—work on the same floor in the Palace of Congresses. We work hand in hand, as it were: We regularly collect the stenographic reports of speeches from the editorial and publishing office for the preparation of our reports. The stenographic reports are then received in the editorial office for publication from here.

But even for us, it transpires, the actual place where the stenographic reports are prepared is off-limits. You only have to step away from the door where the files containing the prepared texts are located to penetrate into the interior of the office and a broad-shouldered young man will bar your way and send you back rather unceremoniously into the corridor. What kind of secrets, then, accompany a deputy's speech on its route from the microphone to the printed text?

Incidentally, I. Bunin, leader of the editorial and publication apparatus, gladly initiated me into all the details of this process. The work is, in his words, purely technical. No semantic correction of the speeches at all is allowed. A group of skilled editors merely brings the stenographic report into line with the norms of the Russian language. The monitoring and checking services clarify names, titles, quotations, and references to documents mentioned in the speeches. If there are any fuzzy points, the text is checked against the videorecording and if even this is insufficient, the editorial and publication apparatus workers consult with the speakers themselves.

The work is carried out pretty quickly. The transfer from spoken to written language will be completed roughly 30 minutes after the speech.

Does the text undergo any kind of censorship?

"We do involve staffers from the Main Administration for Safeguarding State Secrets in our work, but only as consultants," I. Bunin said, "to ensure that state secrets do not get into print."

"Do conflicts occur whereby speakers consider that their words have been distorted in the stenographic report?"

"For practical purposes, no...."

But my question was clearly well-timed. The door opened then and there and standing there was a deputy, who pointed out an omission in the stenographic report of his speech that had already been published in the bulletin. This appreciably distorted the meaning. After a brief discussion it was decided to make a correction.

I am convinced that the mistake was purely technical and not due to political editing or any censorship. It is annoying, of course, but the workload placed on the editorial and publishing apparatus is pretty heavy. Around 40 people work there in two shifts: typists, stenographers, workers in the monitoring and checking service, plus editors. But the pace is fast and the responsibility high.

17 December

PRAVDA Version of Gorbachev Opening Report

PM1812143190 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 18 Dec 90 Second Edition pp 1,2

[Report by USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev at the session of Fourth Congress of People's Deputies at the Kremlin Palace of Congresses in Moscow: "Switching from Talk to Action, Moving Resolutely Forward: M.S. Gorbachev's Report." the Moscow Television Version of this speech was published in the 18 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 32, column one, under the headline "Gorbachev Speaks on State of Union 17 Dec"]

[Text] Comrade people's deputies! The current situation in the country is a difficult one. For the time being,

processes of crisis are continuing to build up in the economy, in the social and political spheres, and especially in interethnic relations. Stability and order have been undermined. Every person, every family, the labor collective, and the whole country are experiencing this for themselves.

There is great alarm in society, both about today and the future. Dissatisfaction is increasing with the way the central, republican, and local bodies of authority, especially the bodies of executive authority, are functioning in this situation. The question of whether the course toward perestroyka has been chosen correctly, whether the points of reference and targets taken are right, and whether we have not been sidetracked is being put with ever increasing frequency. People want to sort out the reasons for what is happening and find to its essence.

This is all very serious. We are experiencing a really critical moment. An obvious threat has arisen to the great cause which we set about five years ago and which created the preconditions for the profound renewal of the country in the world as a whole.

In this connection I want primarily to talk about the following: Yes, it is indeed very difficult for s now. We have found ourselves in an onerous situation. Perestroyka is proceeding with complications, painfully, overcoming incredibly great obstacles of both an objective and subjective nature.

To a great extent the situation is explained by the depth of the crisis which our society found itself in long before 1985, and of course by the enormity and complexity of the transformations which we are carrying out on the path to humane, democratic socialism. But this is not the only reason.

Already in the course of perestroyka the country's leadership has made major mistakes and miscalculations. We have underestimated the depth of the crisis in society. Ill-thought-out and hasty decisions were made in carrying out economic and political reforms. The dangers that were looming were not always assessed in a correct and timely fashion. We did not act decisively to prevent them from burgeoning into negative phenomena.

It is all so. These are hard lessons for us, as, indeed, for our whole society. But we cannot fall into a state of panic. We must not falter or lose our heads under the pressure of the difficulties which have emerged; and the main thing is to act to remove the really serious dangers, making use of those opportunities which perestroyka opened up, and these are enormous. Perestroyka gave society freedom and democracy, stirred millions of people with their hopes and their long-suppressed interests, and with the enormous desire for rapid changes. This is a very great achievement and, I am certain, a decisive factor in getting out of the present difficult phase of development and onto the broad path of transformations.

We have destroyed the bulwarks of the totalitarian administrative command system, which for decades fettered society, and have embarked upon transforming ownership relations in order to engage the interests of the individual, to make him the master of the means of production and the results of his labor, to unleash his initiative. I am certain that this also will exert an enormous influence on the whole dynamic process of the social and economic development of the country if we proceed firmly along this path. We have put an end to the unitarist approach to the development of a multinational state and have opened up the path toward the national rebirth of all peoples. We have never known such freedom of thought. Now, no one is persecuted for dissension. Victims of mass repressions have been rehabilitated. The treasures of native and world culture, which had been concealed, have been returned to the people.

In our foreign policy we have decisively facilitated an improvement in the international situation, and, jointly with other states, have removed the threat of a world nuclear war. Our soldiers have returned from Afghanistan, and I am certain that the like will never again be repeated.

Favorable external conditions have been created for internal development also. As a result of ending the arms race, we are directing colossal resources toward national needs.

This is why—seeing the entire complexity and danger of the situation which has arisen—I resolutely oppose those who, irrespective of which goals they pursue, sow panic and coldbloodedly prevent us from confidently seeking the correct solution and from acting as befits the requirements of real life. The only reasonable policy today consists in halting, through joint efforts, a deepening of the crisis; in overcoming our weaknesses and the negative trends which have become apparent in society; and in one to one-and-a-half years bringing the country into the open spaces of normal, healthy development on the path of renewal.

It is precisely in this direction that feelings in society are changing. This has become particularly noticeable following discussion, at the Supreme Soviet on 17 November this year, of the proposed program measures and the adoption of a decision on the situation in the country. People perceive this decision as a bold turn toward energetic, practical steps in changing the existing situation for the better. The whole country is now looking to our congress. The congress will be making a number of crucial decisions, including changes to the structure of the organs of executive power and alterations and additions to the USSR Constitution. The main thing is to confirm our determination and to act. We must, in these days, organize the work of the congress to justify the expectations of the people.

I.

Comrade deputies, the most essential thing now to overcome the crisis is to restore order to the country. This boils down to the matter of power. If there is firm power, discipline, control over the implementation of decisions, then we will be able to get a normal supply of foodstuffs flowing, to curb criminals, and to stop interethnic hostility. If we do not achieve this, an increase in disorder, the rampaging of forces of darkness, and the collapse of statehood are inevitable. In the extraordinary circumstances which have developed, the most determined actions are required, without any delay. I am not talking about a return to the methods—which we have condemned and rejected—of unrestricted dictatorship and arbitrary rule. I mean a power functioning on the basis of the law and capable of ensuring stability and civic peace, and of overcoming the crisis situation, within the framework of legality.

Life itself has led us to the presidential form of rule, to the need to create political and state structures that correspond to the processes occurring within society. I see the tasks of presidential power in defending citizen's rights, the honor and dignity of every person, the normal functioning of the constitutional system and state institutions. It is precisely for the sake of these objectives that strong executive power is needed at all levels, from the head of state down to the executive committees in town and country: power able to achieve observance of laws and implementation of decisions and capable of upholding due order and discipline.

It seems to me that everyone who lives by his own work, who holds dear the fate of our country, its present and future, has an interest in this kind of power. It is precisely these people, united in work collectives and public organizations, and these strata of society that form the social mainstay of presidential power. Presidential power aimed at revolutionary transformations relies on the support of young men and women, of the country's women, and is willing to cooperate broadly with them in tackling state and social problems.

Institutions for working among women and young people will be formed within the future structure of presidential authority.

A natural and inalienable part of the forces in society is is the CPSU. The cooperation of these public forces will make it possible to realize the ultimate goal of perestroyka—the renewal of our society within the framework of the socialist choice on the path of moving toward a humane and democratic socialism.

The proposition of constitutional additions and amendments in connection with the reorganization of presidential authority is in your hands, and I will express just a few ideas. Under the new structure, the president, as head of state, will directly lead a cabinet of ministers and unite and coordinate the activity of all higher Union bodies of authority and government. In this manner, the dispersal of forces and parallelism which occur today will be overcome, control will be firmed up, and the persona responsibility of officials for tasks entrusted to them will be intensified.

In such a complex country as ours, the range of tasks of the president is enormous, especially now in the period of transition, and it is important that there should work alongside him a vice president who has his own permanent duties and at the same time fulfills specific instructions of the president.

A cabinet of ministers led by a prime minister will be the executive apparatus of presidential authority. It will include the leaders of ministries and departments in charge of those spheres of government which will be assigned to the Union in keeping with the allocation of powers between it and the republics.

A certain period will be required for switching to the new structure at Union level. Some questions will be resolved without delay, and others according to the extent of their elaboration and changes in the situation in the economy, taking account of the increasing spread of market relations and the appropriate mechanisms coming into play.

The president bears responsibility for the country's security, and in our time the concept of public security has grown significantly more broad. It does not boil down to guarding the country from external threat, but also entails ensuring the constitutional rights of citizens, averting disruptions and catastrophes in the economy, and the ecological protection of the population; and the ecological situation in our country is, you know, a very serious one.

The fulfillment of these functions also dictates the need to have in the structure of presidential power a special body in the form of a security council under the president. Its job is to ensure the external and internal security of the country in their indissoluble unity. Accordingly, the Ministries of Defense, Internal Affairs, and Foreign Affairs, the Committee for State Security, along with other departments must be represented in the council. It will also have as members top scholars, specialists, and public figures who enjoy prestige and influence in the country.

The president is the commander in chief. He heads the Defense Council, one of the structural links in the security council. Experience has convinced us that it is important not only to adopt the correct laws and decisions, but also to strive to see that they are rigorously implemented, to monitor the processes thoroughly and strictly. This demanded the creation of a USSR Monitoring Chamber of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the inclusion of the supreme state inspectorate into the system of presidential power. Although each of them has their own specific functions, they have some shared ones too. They are links in the monitoring system, whose role is in cooperation with the republic authorities, to check on the fulfillment of state acts and on the effectiveness of the laws and of presidential decrees.

A new role is allotted to the Federation Council in the system of presidential power. This step is connected with the transformation of our state into a union of sovereign republics. The new functions of the Federation Council are laid out in the law and have generated lively interest and quite a lot of discussion. These discussions can be continued, but it would be better, in my opinion, if the Federation Council started working rigth away on a regular basis and developed with experience an improved mechanism for its functioning. After all, having endless discussions and drowning actions in words means dragging out the solution of urgent, pressing problems.

We need a body like this. It reflects the new reality connected with the profound transformations of our multinational state. With its prestigious recommendations, the Federation Council will help to prevent quarrels and to find just and sensible solutions. Of course, this does not mean a substitution for such bodies of a law-governed state as the Constitutional Oversight Committee—and in future that could be the constitutional Court—and the whole of the judicial system, whose role, I believe, will grow and grow as society is further democraticized.

We have started on a path—and I am sure we shall go continue along it—of further demarcating the functions of legislative, executive, and judicial authority.

The expediency of such a demarcation is proven by world practice. The new nature of all of the Union bodies finds its expression in the fact that they will all work with the direct participation of representatives of the republics. This applies both to the cabinet of ministers and to the ministries and departments.

I also want to speak of the cadre side of the matter. Changes in the functions and character of the work presuppose the thorough renewal of the cadre composition of the Union bodies and apparatus. Naturally, that should not be done in a mechanical way but in a considered way, and continuity should be preserved. They should be people who have already won authority as firm supporters of the policy of perestroyka and its active participants. They should be competent and capable at this critical moment in our development to solve in practice the problems of overcoming the crisis.

Such, comrades, are the basic approaches on which a solid system of presidential power will be created. But the system of presidential power will be able to function effectively if all executive power in the country functions effectively. This is now being hindered by the muddle which has occurred here in the division of powers between the elected bodies and their executive committees and also by the breaking of the inter-linkage of executive power the whole way down the line.

We, in fact, have encountered a kind of paralysis of executive power in the localities, at a republican level and at the center. We must cut this knot by tabling amendments and additions to the Constitution. Thus, the creation of a system of presidential power presupposes an enhancement in the role and the responsibility of all executive power in the country. We are taking these measures even before the signing of the Union treaty. We simply do not have the time to wait. The situation is, as one says, taking us by the throat. We must act.

At the same time I believe we acted correctly by including into the congress agenda a discussion on the draft Union treaty. A special report will be devoted to it. I wish merely to set out my own basic position on certain key issues. Above all, there is every reason to state, I think, that in the country and among the people agreement is becoming ever more evident regarding the vital need to preserve the Union certainly in a transformed state and on the basis of democratic principles while retaining the unity of the USSR and the sovereignty of the republics. In this regard I want to stress that the sovereignty of the republics is a historically irreversible stage in the development of our state of many nations.

While moving away from excessive centralization and unitarism, the Union must not be allowed to be transformed into an amorphous formation and even less so to disintegrate. That would reflect most seriously upon the fate of millions of people and upon the entire world situation.

We have now entered the stage of a radical transformation of the multiethnic state. Its future—and therefore the future of all of us, the future of every nation—is being decided. We believe the principle of every nation having the right to self-determination is an immutable one. But it is the right of the nation as a whole. The best way in which a nation can express its will is through a referendum. I submit for examination by the congress the proposal that a referendum be held throughout the country, so that each citizen can express himself for or against a union of sovereign states based on the federal principle. The result of the referendum in each republic will be the final verdict. As far as secession from the USSR is concerned, it can only be carried out on the basis of a corresponding law, and in the process all aspects of this complex political and socioeconomic process must be taken into consideration without fail.

Another fundamental question has arisen. Recently, we have come up against a situation in which the republics and other national and territorial formations, declaring every kind of change in their legal status, ignore the USSR Constitution which is in force. Such a "partisan" approach, to put it crudely, threatens serious unrest and simply chaos. That is a dead end, and you and I already sense that already. Therefore, I consider it necessary that the Congress of People's Deputies states firmly that the USSR Constitution remains the supreme legislative act subject to unconditional implementation, right up to conclusion of a Union treaty, which will determine once and for all the legal status of all its participants. Presidential power will operate proceeding from this.

There are themes which should not be avoided when discussing the situation in the country and the adoption of a Union treaty. In some cases these are interethnic strife, in other cases separatism, or even the two together; in a number of regions and first of all in the republics of Transcaucasia, the Baltic, Uzbekistan, Moldova, these have led to sharp confrontation, worsening of people's lives and safety, and to tragic events.

They call into question the very existence of a union state. The tolerance shown in a number of cases by local, republican and, in this respect I must admit it self-critically, by the president of the USSR as well have entailed a range of serious consequences on some occasions. These are just not permissible.

Decisive measures are essential to put an end to the destructive actions of separatist and nationalist forces. These demands are coming from all corners of our multiethnic state. This is the will of the people, and I hope that the Congress, in expressing it, will come out straightforwardly on this question.

Comrades, especially now we need strong power to launch a decisive offensive against crime and to strike a ruthless blow to gangsterism, economic sabotage, bribery, profiteering, theft, and hooliganism. Simply to coordinate the activity of law enforcement bodies has proven to be insufficient. Special structures attached to the president to combat organized crime are being created. Tough measures are required and we will go for them.

Statements made by leaders of the law enforcement bodies and of the Defense Ministry point this out with the utmost clarity. That is the policy of the presidential authority . It will be carried out without deviation. We count on your understanding and on the support of people's deputies, of all organs of power, and of society as a whole.

Greater exactingness will be required of the law enforcement bodies, and cadres will be strengthened. But the judicial foundations for their activity, which will enable the honor, dignity, life, and health of the staff of law enforcement bodies to be clearly and reliably protected, will also be strengthened. The material base of their difficult and dangerous work will be improved. Additional measures will be adopted to improve the living conditions of personnel.

There is the need to adopt within a short period of time a law on the militia and organs of state security.

There is a special issue concerning the Armed Forces. On their shoulders rest the defense of our state. The Army is the vital bulwark of the country's state sovereignty and of its external and internal stability. It is now going through a period of deep reform and is in need of all-round attention and concern. I consider it necessary to condemn resolutely from the congress' rostrum all denigration of our Armed Forces and discrimination against them. We should exclude all violations of the rights of servicemen and members of their families and anti-humane and dangerously provocative actions with regard to housing, retail and domestic services, and employment for retired personnel.

I am confident that the congress will express full confidence in the country's Armed Forces and in their command, officers, and men. I want to stress that the problems of the country's Armed Forces will be in the forefront of the work of presidential authority and of all its organs.

II.

Comrade deputies, the very first problem which presidential power and its new structures will immediately tackle is that of food. What is occurring today is not just a shortage of products. It is the consequence of disorder, the absence of control, and criminal irresponsibility with regard to the population; the result of the unprecedented disruption of supplies between republics and oblasts, the severance of economic ties and the breakdown of normal relations between town and country. Moscow, Leningrad, Sverdlovsk, Chelyabinsk, Kemerovo, Khabarovsk, and other industrial centers have found themselves in a very grave situation. People's indignation simply reaches crisis point when they see that republics and oblasts are disrupting food supplies while continuing to consume metal, gas, oil, and coal and receive trucks and various kinds of equipment supplied by industrial centers. I ask: What kind of sovereignty is this? Is it for this that sovereign rights are being asserted?

I want to state once again that we can ensure per capita consumption in 1991 at a level no lower than the current year through our own production and import purchases. But we need to regulate the use of food resources. This concerns harvesting, transportation, storage, processing, and, of course, above all, trade distribution.

We need urgent measures to put the situation right. What is already being done and what is planned? Collective and state farms and the whole agrarian sector are being allocated the necessary material resources for production volumes. For the purposes of ensuring a guaranteed supply of agricultural produce to state stocks and increasing incentives for its producers, it is deemed expedient to introduce a state order for 1991 for all owners and users of land engaged in commodity production. The volumes of such supplies should not exceed 60 percent of the average annual procurements over the last five years. Payment will be made, in this case, at state procurement prices. All produce that remains following the fulfillment of obligatory supplies is freely sold on the consumer market.

By 1991, new food and processing industry capacities should be brought into operation, which will make it possible to increase production of output by about R5-6 billion. A considerable part should be commissioned as early as in the first three or four months of next year.

To make rational use of agricultural produce produced by the population, measures are envisaged to improve the work of Tsentrosoyuz [USSR Central Union of Consumer Societies], above all in regard to its material and technical basis. This will make it possible to increase food supplies to the retail trade network by an extra R3 billion.

A great deal of work must of course be done in relation to carrying out urgent measures to improve food purchases. First and foremost, the republican governments and the soviets' executive committees must by 15 January conclude contracts on state purchases under contract with all types of farms—with all types, I stress.

Taking account of the lessons of the current year, and the disruptions in supplies to industrial centers, I propose an agreement for 1991 be signed between the republics on food supply matters. This provides for appropriate supplies to the Union and republican reserves and strict economic and legal liability. All restrictions which hamper the movement of food on the country's territory must be lifted. Otherwise artificial obstacles are created to resolving the main task, the tranfer to the market. Such an agreement must be signed during the days that the congress is in session, and the congress will be briefed on this matter.

Further, the USSR Procuracy and law-enforcement bodies have been issued instructions to step up the fight against all abuses, in particular against organized crime

along the whole food supply chain. Given the importance of this tasks, and given that in a number of cases we are coming up against economic sabotage, the State Security bodies throughout the country have been brought into this matter. With the same aim, a decree has been issued on expanding the powers of the workers' control bodies. These will interact with the law enforcement bodies. Local authorities and labor collectives will, I hope, give them due support.

The measures outlined are in many respects emergency ones. But we cannot resolve the food question, nor emerge from the crisis, unless we bring about, as a whole, an abrupt turnabout in the very attitude toward the peasantry and unless we change the social aspect of rural areas. The peasant has always been, and remains, the breadwinner of society. His difficult work demands every possible support, and if we are saying that we should long since have moved from words to deeds, then this relates first and foremost to the economic and social transformation of the entire rural way of life.

The rebirth of the countryside is society's moral duty. This is why the agrarian issue will be of priority in all policies relating to the renewal of the country. We favor diversity in the forms of management in rural areas and have embarked on the path of transformation. This path must be followed, relying on the wisdom and common sense of the peasants and of everyone who works on the land. The year 1991 should be the turning point in the reform of land relations. I propose to state in a special declaration of our congress that, from 1 January, peasant farms and all citizens should be allocated, without impediment, with plots of land for the production of agricultural output, for life, and with the right to inheritance, on a leasehold basis.

By presidential decree, the republican and local bodies will be recommended to grant additional areas of farmland to all owners of private plots who want them. A decree on the fulfillment of the requests of citizens wishing to engage in horticulture and market gardening has been prepared and dispatched for agreement with the republics. According to the calculations, up to 5 million hectares of land will be needed for this. Republican and local bodies must, without wasting time, inventory all land, whoever it might belong to, and on this basis form state land reserves to be granted to peasant farms, lessees, cooperatives, and to all citizens who express the wish to live and work in rural areas. With this aim instructions have been given to elaborate and to put into practice a system of privileges and incentives for peasant and private plot farms. In my opinion, understanding is now taking shape in society on all these questions; but there is one fundamental question on which opinions have become divided, and the struggle is growing. I mean the question of the private ownership of land. My point of view on this account is known: I think it is precisely this question on which the people themselves should adopt the decision. Their decision will be final. As president of the country I present by way of legislative initiative for the examination of the Fourth Congress of People's Deputies the proposal on holding in the country a referendum by republic on this question.

In conclusion, I want to express the certainty that the Soviet peasantry and workers in all branches of the agrarian sector will properly assess the situation in the country, the support which they will be rendered, will make use of the new economic management conditions, and will try to ensure an increase in food products.

III

Concerning the stabilization of the economy as a whole: The USSR Supreme Soviet has adopted the "Basic Guidelines for the Stabilization of the National Economy and the Transition to a Market Economy." This means that the period of discussion and the comparison of alternative drafts has come to an end. The time for action has come, particularly since the situation which has arisen is not a simple one. As yet, the plan and the budget for 1991 have not been confirmed. The reason is uncoordinated activities and the presence of contradictory laws adopted recently by union and republican bodies.

An unprecedented situation has arisen as a result of which there is no clarity on the fundamental issues of life—both for working people engaged in the material sphere of production, and in industrial sectors financed out of the budget. It may happen that both the former and the latter will find themselves without wages as early as January if this situation is not defused. In connection with this I issued instructions on the preparation of a provisional agreement on economic matters between the republics for 1991. The draft of such a document has been considered in all the republics, and comments have been received. After further work, the agreement will be signed. I think that the leaders of the republics—the republics which make up the Federation Council—understanding the complexity of the situation which has emerged, will weigh all the negative consequences of procrastinating over adopting this agreement, and will show political wisdom and due responsibility.

This will remove the obstacles in the path toward the normal functioning of the national economy in the difficult period of transition toward the market. Taking into account that this coordination will nevertheless

involve some time, a decree on preserving the economic ties which have taken shape has been issued, and the government has adopted a resolution regulating economic ties and budget relations for the first quarter of the coming year.

At that same time, in those same days, other urgent issues were being decided. It was necessary to ease the situation which had arisen at light industry enterprises because of the delay in solving the question of the supply of raw materials within the country and through imports. Measures have now been taken for advance procurements and deliveries of the appropriate resources.

In this difficult period, a great deal is going to depend upon the work of the enterprises of the fuel and energy complex, transportation, and communications. Given the limitations on budget allocations it is necessary to create a special stabilizing fund, one task of which is to ensure the reliable functioning of these vital branches of the country's life support. I hope the miners, oilmen, railwaymen, telecommunications workers, and workers in basic industries fully understand how crucial this moment is and will do all in their power for the normal functioning of the whole of our economy. They are second to none for their ability to work and overcome difficulties, their patriotism and sense of responsibility for the country's affairs.

The top-priority problem for the country today is to normalize money circulation and reduce the state budget deficit. With this aim, the following measures will be taken: A steep cut in capital investments in production; the freezing and sale of uncompleted projects; concentration of financial and material resources on projects due for completion; considerable reduction of subsidies to loss-making enterprises; the cutting-back of administrative and management costs and the switching of many organizations funded from the state budget to self-financing; reduction of military expenditure; reduction of emission as a means of covering the deficit, the budget deficit.

There will be a continuation of the policy of attracting funds from the population to the savings banks for the guaranteed acquisition of consumer durables, the sale of apartments, garden plots and market-garden allotments, construction materials, garages, etc: The cabinet of ministers will come to grips directly with the solving of these questions and will report back regularly. At the stage of stabilization we cannot do without a mechanism to tie the wages and salaries fund rigidly to the end results of economic activity.

What is happening at present: On the results of this year, industrial production is expected to fall by approximately 1.5 percent, while wages will nevertheless rise by about 8 percent. Together with the growth of other monetary income, this is the main source of inflation, which in any case eats up the increase in incomes and holds back movement toward the market. It by no means follows from what has been said that any obstacle is being raised to high earnings. On the contrary: I will say that highly productive labor must be accompanied by a growth of wages. But it is important that this growth should be directly and rigidly linked to an increase in the output of goods and an improvement of their quality. The next few months are, at the same time, also a period of active work to form a market infrastructure and new forms of economic activity in the conditions of transition to the market. From the new year there will be a radical change in the role of the banking system on the basis of laws passed by the USSR Supreme Soviet. Gosbank is being withdrawn from the system of the organs of executive power. At the same time, the network of commercial, joint-stock, cooperative, and other nonstate banks will be developed extensively.

On the subject of taking things out of state hands: We see the examining of this issue as a transition to a multiplicity of forms of ownership, to new forms of economic management and enterprise, and as a means of motivating all our economy by means of increasing the stimulii to labor. Such an approach is reinforced by legislation, and this will be our starting point.

However, questions arise in society. The first of these I would answer in the following way: Taking things out of state hands cannot be reduced either to a change of signs on the Union enterprises, nor to them being handed over from Union ownership to republican ownership. In such a case, in exchange for the diktat of Union ministries, there would be the no less harsh diktat of the republican departments, and such already exists. The essence lies in the enterprise becoming an entity of the market enjoying full rights.

Another question: Will the state remain the owner? Undoubtedly, this is the practice throughout the world. State property can be property belonging to the Union, republic, or local authorities: Everywhere where it is necessary to the functioning of our entire economic mechanism. But all types of state enterprises should work on the common principles of the market economy and have the same rights as cooperative, joint-stock, lease, and other enterprises.

It is difficult to predetermine everything in detail now with regard to how the process of taking things out of

state hands will proceed. At my instruction a draft program for the removal of property from state hands and for the demonopolization of the national economy has been prepared, but it should be discussed and worked out in a most careful fashion, both in society and also by the bodies with legislative power. Only after this should it be definitely adopted. But it is absolutely clear that with removing things from state hands, the priority in obtaining shares and bonds, in buying out enterprises, should be given to members of the labor collectives and to labor veterans. To stimulate the process of removing things from state hands it is proposed that part of the balance of the economic incentive funds and also part of the profit received in 1991 should be targeted for buying up shares to be passed on to workers in the labor collectives.

The USSR state property fund, which is being set up, is to determine the procedure for assessing property and the allocation of shares among members of collectives. Such a fund should be fully formed in the coming days.

Structural policy is a most important component in the restructuring of our economy, lending it greater dynamism, social orientation, and receptiveness to innovations. With this aim, the emphasis in investment policy is being placed on the development of science-intensive plants, and the introduction of non-wasteful technologies. Conversion is of great significance here—well thought-out, resolutely implemented, and closely bound up with the modernization of the whole machine-building complex in cooperation with foreign partners. The draft of this program has been discussed at the Presidential Council, with the involvement of a large collective of scientists and specialists.

I want to announce to the congress that after further work, the program has been confirmed, and on this basis, practical work in industrial sectors will be developed to implement it. Here it is very important to preserve highly-qualified cadres who have hitherto been working in the defense complex and to rationally deploy resources and the technological culture of these enterprises. The program contains a whole system of incentives and protective mechanisms which create stimuli to develop the output of civilian production. We are faced with a state-wide task—the restructuring of the principles of the organization and the provision of incentives for science in higher education and industry and for the whole education system in the country. We have embarked on this, starting with the fundamental sciences. A state program for the development of higher education and for public education is being prepared.

Through restructuring we set the task of switching the country into the world economic system. A number of steps in this direction have been made. We have renounced the idea of placing foreign trade totally into the state's hands. We have given enterprises free access to the external market. Access has been opened up for foreign capital. We have abandoned the ideological approach, which often led to the squandering of resources in economic relations with a number of countries. Trade is being transferred to a mutually beneficial basis.

Regarding the convertibility of the ruble. We have already begun to create conditions for this. Previously, we thought that it was a task for a remote future. Life demanded a different approach. Several stages will be required, of course, the first of which will involve convertibility on the internal market. Unfortunately, our foreign trade structure is predetermined. We have to pay for the way affairs were run before us. What is being exported are mainly energy and raw material resources. But even in this situation, for the moment forced upon us, it is possible to act wisely. Even in 1991 we will in a purposeful way attract foreign capital to carry out a technological renewal of our potential in the spheres of raw materials, fuel and power, to process, in greater depth, raw materials, and to utilize our colossal waste, taking into account, of course, environmental requirements.

We will stimulate the flow of foreign capital mainly into the spheres from which we will receive comparatively quick returns in order to raise the living standards of the population. The spheres involved will be light and food industries, new technologies, and modernization of power engineering, transport and communications.

As for foreign currency, the country's situation has recently become worse. Now, as you know, a Union-republican committee for foreign currency has been set up to regulate the problems of interrepublican and intersector relations in the sphere of foreign currency. In this respect, 1991 will be the most difficult one for us. The highest payments on the loans and credits we drew in the past fall precisely in that year. Even in 1992 the repayments will fall to exactly half as much. Talks have been held with the leadership of a number of countries about providing us with credits. The day before yesterday, in Rome, the conference of heads of states and governments of the European Community endorsed a plan to assist the USSR with credit, and technological and other assistance to support our economic reforms—a plan which also includes urgent deliveries of food throughout 1991, part of which will be free of charge.

Not everyone understands of course that for all the importance of aid and credits from abroad, they will not by themselves resolve our problems. We must rely on our

own efforts, upon the level of our organization, upon resoluteness in the transition to the market and a regime of the strictest thriftiness. Prices, revenues and social policy: In conditions of a market economy, prices will be determined in the final analysis by supply and demand. But this cannot be achieved overnight.

With an unbalanced market, an uncontrolled growth in prices would strike at the standard of living of many people. We will gradually expand the range of free prices, combine them with prices set centrally, and guarantee the social protection of the population. We are now engaged in the elaboration of this system. All steps in this sphere should be coordinated on the basis of agreement. The Council of the Federation, with its new functions, should play a large role here. Price growth is already occurring. Everyone feels this. The state should act so that this process, inevitably at the initial stage, should not affect people too painfully, especially those poorly provided for and individuals on fixed payment, the income of individuals on fixed payment—teachers, doctors, servicemen, scientists, culture officials, and officials from state establishments.

A number of decisions have already been adopted on these issues. Thus, in 1991, resources amounting to more than R65 billion will be directed toward the material support of our citizens on low incomes. Expenditure on social and cultural aims by the state alone will increase by more than 30 percent next year, by as much as it has increased over the previous 15 years together. A decision has been adopted on increasing, ahead of schedule, the rates and salary of workers in culture, health, education and a number of other branches in the budget, and on a significant increase in pensions, in students' grants, and in allowances for mothers.

A special law was adopted recently on the social protection of the disabled. The first reading of a law on employment has taken place in the USSR Supreme Soviet. It envisages reliable guarantees; a state employment service is being set up, and the system for training and retraining cadres is being expanded. A special concern of presidential power is that—together with the republics—active policies should be conducted in the sphere of public health directed toward a qualitative improvement in maintaining health in the country. In short, social policies will constantly gain in strength and be perfected.

Finally, comrades, on one more essential condition to surmount the crisis—that is, the concentration of the cultural and intellectual potential of the country on constructive and creative work. I speak of this, rendering appropriate dues to the great and indispensable contribution which was made by the scientific and artistic intelligentsia to the process of the renewal and democratization of society and to the policies of perestroyka. At the same time I have to tell you that the dissipation of the energies by a considerable proportion of the intelligentsia in clarifying relations with the past and of relations between its various groupings, is doing society a bad turn and is being used to arouse destructive passions which destabilize public consciousness. In the conditions of the exacerbation of the crisis, the talent and knowledge of a proportion of the intelligentsia are channelled not into reassuring the people, not into the search for sensible approaches to the problems which have arisen, but into fanning, unfortunately, in a number of occasions, a fire, including also in interethnic relations where matters have reached the point of open hostilities, bloodshed, and of setting republics against each other. Yesterday, and even today, the language of some representatives of the intelligentsia, unfortunately, is by no means always well-considered and responsible.

At the same time I would support in every way the alarm, the anxiety of many representatives of the intelligentsia, at the fact that hordes of unscrupulous culture merchants have flooded the radio, television screen, the press, and, abusing the calling of the intellectual, freedom of creation, and our democracy, are pushing through hackwork, vulgarity, and shoddy, inhuman wares and are thereby damaging public morality and discrediting the very concept of culture.

I appeal to the entire intelligentsia of our multiethnic country to give full consideration to their duty at this moment, which is crucial for the homeland. I hope for their understanding and support for those practical measures which will be undertaken by presidential rule for restoring calm and order in the country and ensuring the conditions for continuing profound democratic transformations.

I want to call on the congress to support the declaration adopted on 28 November at the meeting with representatives of culture from throughout the country and addressed to supreme soviets of all levels. This document with the expressive title "Culture Will Save Society if Society Protects Culture," can and must be placed at the foundation of the state's cultural policy. In it are also defined the criteria for the conduct and activity of all true intellectuals, especially at such an alarming period of our development. Understanding the irreplaceable, collective role of culture, presidential rule will act precisely in this spirit, and support in every way society's creative forces in building its cultural potential. In this sphere a commercial, let alone and a mercenary-minded, approach is inadmissible.

Here the guidelines have been defined: The destiny of our homeland, the moral health of the people, and the development of the country's intellectual potentialities. All this is an integral part and a powerful factor of the renewal of the country in the framework of a humane socialist choice.

Comrade deputies! There are quite a few burning questions I have not dealt with in my speech. I thought it necessary to say something about those that cannot be deferred.

In conclusion I want to repeat that with which I began. The situation demands that we mobilize all our material, human and intellectual resources to cross the steep pass on which the country finds itself and to cope with the difficulties on the path of renewing society and emerging on to the road of its dynamic development. The urgent tasks, the immediate outlook, and the goals we are moving toward are now clear to us. All must set to work and get down to practical action. We must make a clean sweep of political intrigue, endless discussion, the whipping-up of passions, and confrontation. Now, more than ever, we need discipline and self-discipline, civil harmony, hard and selfless toil, and confidence in our powers. We ourselves must not give up, and we must not frighten people with the threat of disaster. In a word, our entire society, all labor collectives, every one of us, must make the transition from words to deeds and move resolutely forward.

TV Coverage of 17 December Opening Session

WA0501114890

For Moscow Television Service coverage on the opening session of the Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies, see the 17 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 27, column two.
For the speech by Deputy Umalatova to include a vote of no confidence in the USSR president at the opening session, see the 21 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 32, column two.
For the speech by Deputy Vladimir Murashov, representing the Interregional Group, on the no-confidence motion see the 21 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 33, column two.

Radio Coverage of 17 December Sessions

WA0501115990

For Moscow Domestic Service recorded coverage on the opening day's session of the Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies, see the 18 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 40, column one.
For the speech by Deputy Viktor Alksnis see the 21 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 34, column one.
For a recording of Kazakh leader Nursultan Nazarbeyev remarks on center-republic relations see the 18 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 44, column two.

18 December

Speeches from 18 Dec Sessions Reported

PM2112163390 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Dec 90 Union Edition pp 4-11

[Continuation of the "Stenographic Record of Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies", this section covers the final stages of the 18 December morning session through part of the 19 December morning session]

[Excerpts]

Third Sitting (Conclusion)

[passage omitted] **I.S. Sumarokov,** *general director of the Usolye Agro-Industrial Combine and director of the 60-letiya Soviet Socialist Republic [SSR] Sovkhoz, Usolskiy Rayon, Irkutsk Oblast (Angarskiy Territorial Electoral District):* [passage omitted]

President M.S. Gorbachev's report stressed that the main condition for getting out of the crisis is to impose order in the country. And I am sure that most people think that way. Therefore we, and M.S. Gorbachev in particular, should not fear firmness and, in some places, toughness in imposing order. Times have changed. And the people will understand this correctly because otherwise our life will become no better, of this I am firmly convinced. Where Soviet people's constitutional rights are violated there is a real threat to people's life and health; where vitally important economic questions are not resolved, with chaos the result, it is necessary to resolutely take measures, up to and including the introduction of direct presidential rule. We will not get out of the crisis with half-measures, appeals, and exhortations. [passage omitted]

G.V. Pronin, *fitter at the "Pobedit" plant named for the 50th anniversary of the USSR, Vladikavkaz city (Promyshlennyy National-Territorial Electoral District, North Ossetian ASSR [Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic]):* [passage omitted]

The most real sabotage is going on in the country. We are being constantly intimidated with the prospect of a firm hand and Stalinist times. There is no forgiving those who destroyed totally innocent people, but there is also no forgiving those post-Stalinist leaders (many of whom continue to flourish today) who have caused the moral disintegration of our society and promoted a situation in which the country has literally been pulled to pieces. We have come to the point when the thief has become the most honored and respected person in our society.

There is a wish to make us go back by any means to the starting points of 1985 and again start chanting the slogan "Long live the CPSU!" with all the ensuing consequences. I doubt that anything effective will come of this. I am not calling for the dissolution of the CPSU, of which I have been a member for 30 years, and, incidentally, I am against the party being rabidly blamed for all our sins. The culprits are specific people. The CPSU must go into the next democratic elections on an equal basis with all other parties, and whichever party wins, history must not be repeated. No party, no people's front must be above the law. I am very well aware that this is not a party congress. But I think that neither a party conference not a party congress will resolve this question since it is mainly party apparatchiks who are elected delegates to them. I therefore propose to the CPSU Central Committee that a referendum on this question be held among all CPSU members in the very near future. As things stand, no president, no prime minister can operate in conditions like this. [passage omitted]

And a last point. There is a very great deal of criticism of our president. And you can understand how people feel. What is astonishing is that nobody is nominating another candidate—neither our voters nor the Moscow pickets. So it is still premature to talk about replacing the president. I have only one wish to express to him—for more determination in implementing the measures discussed not only in the report but also in many speeches. Otherwise we are all in trouble. [passage omitted]

Fourth Sitting

Kremlin Palace of Congresses, 18 December 1990, 1600.

N.N. Dementey, chairman of the Belorussian SSR Supreme Soviet in the chair. [passage omitted]

V.M. Falin, *secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and chief of the CPSU Central Committee International Department (From the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Relations With Foreign Countries and the Soviet Society for Cultural Relations With Compatriots Abroad):* Lofty congress! Esteemed president! First I wish to make a number of remarks in connection with the speeches by Deputy Brodavskiy and Deputy Ruutel. Since inaccuracies were allowed, the correct thing would be to eliminate them in order to avoid misunderstandings. The accession of Wilno (or Vilnius) and its environs to Poland was never recognized by the Soviet Union, as was recorded in the corresponding documents signed by the Soviet Government in the twenties and thirties. To claim otherwise is to dispute the actual facts.

As for Deputy Ruutel's thesis that the 1940 voting procedure and decision have no legal foundation, the following can be said to that: The topic of the lawfulness or otherwise of the decisions adopted by the parliament of Estonia and a number of other states during that period can be argued about in the same plane as our discussions of other questions—namely how democratic were the 1918 decisions on the secession of Estonian and some other states from Soviet Russia. Because at that time the lifetime of the governments that adopted those decisions was measured not in years, months, or weeks: The decisions were adopted by governments which existed for just minutes. And in any case we will probably agree that a referendum on the secession of these states, these republics from Russia was not held at the time. And at some time the people themselves must be given the right to decide this fundamental question—and whatever they decide must be in accordance with the law adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union.

Comrades, beyond the walls of this hall more and more people are asking: Can we concentrate on the main problems, are we ready to give answers to these problems—the answers that people expect from us? Maybe it is time we asked ourselves the same thing? Just look at how, when disorders are being described, the gloomiest lashing epithets are chosen, literally predicting an apocalypse if we do not act within an hour or two or adopt the necessary stringent, competent decisions. Attacks on the authorities—central, republic, and any other authorities, who are accused of every mortal sin—are being waged with particular feeling in this context.

There probably are things that are worthy of blame. But when accusations are made, it is essential not to lose sight of the main thing, not to miss the target. For instance, emotions have been "let loose" at those present here and the millions of voters watching the discussions on television. So what comes next? Appropriate decisions. Where are they? Why don't they exist? And unless the present congress adopts such decisions and makes plain its position on all the questions of real concern to the people (first and foremost those relating to order in the country and our economy) it will not be serving its purpose and will maybe disqualify itself from continuing to exist.

The building of a rule-of-law state, in which the law rather than people must rule, undoubtedly ranks among the crucial tasks. Have we gotten close to this, a new situation for us, in the last few years? The answer is unequivocal: As of today the distance separating us from the triumph of law has even increased. Yet even before that, Soviet legislation was not distinguished for being highly developed, in many areas there was a legal vacuum, and there was an absence of any modern legal provisions. A very convenient situation because scope was thereby provided for arbitrary activity. And attempts were made to justify the arbitrariness, irrespective of who was the source of it.

During the years of perestroyka we have not followed the path of filling these "breaches" with modern laws and replacing less than perfect norms with better ones. A situation has developed whereby a mood to topple absolutely everything has developed in society and the floodgates have been opened to anarchy, base passions, and immoderateness. The consequences were not long in coming in literally all spheres. The lack of compliance with the law and order in the broad and most specific sense is the most acute of all our shortages, in my view. And, moreover, this is a source and catalyst of many shortages, primarily in the economy. The market is de facto entering the pores of our life, and barter exchange has become firmly established. And a visible practice in this barter exchange is "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth."

Without a strong and reliable legal "corset" there cannot be a major change for the better in the country's development. Even a powerful factor like economic interest does not work absolutely effectively if the law does not define every citizen's rights and duties and is not equally benevolent and stern toward everybody without exception.

But what is the use of even the best laws (and many have been adopted in recent years) if they are not fulfilled by both individuals and legal entities. There is another aspect to compliance with the law if laws remain no more than a collection of nonoperative paragraphs and articles. From the standpoint of the president compliance, with the law means not only scrupulous respect for the Constitution and laws on his own part, but also concern to ensure that the law is paramount at all times, in all places, and in all things and all violations will be stopped with all severity.

We have not made much progress in this direction either. I am inclined to think that on the whole the absence of order and due respect for the law in society explains most of the failures of perestroyka and the difficulties we are encountering today every step of the way. Legal nihilism is a direct road to national and state disaster, a road to nowhere.

What I have said applies wholly and fully to the program which we are discussing for extracting the country from the crisis. What is needed is not only, and not so much, more and more new plans and more and more fresh debates about them. Sometime it is necessary to make a choice and, once the choice has been made, to concentrate on implementing the adopted decision and translating every word into action. It goes without saying that from the outset a decision can be effective only when it matches our own assessments of the situation. If this is an emergency situation, it is necessary to act accordingly.

The primary task is to make labor honorable and make bad work, violations of the law, and noncompliance with adopted commitments unacceptable. And here it is necessary to borrow the experience of developed countries, where the violation of contractual commitments does not mean some kind of fine which the violator finds quite acceptable. There violations result in the violator being completely ruined and brought to account with all the severity of the law.

I reemphasize: Without resolving the discipline and order problem we will not solve any of the problems worrying our society today.

Chairman: Deputy Khayeyev has the floor. The next to speak will be Deputy Osipov.

I. Khayeyev, *chairman of the Tajik SSR Council of Ministers (Voseyskiy National-Territorial Electoral District, Tajik SSR):* Esteemed comrades! Does it not seem to you that the pluralism of opinions and of public movements, which we rightly number among the achievements in the democratization of the country's life, has recently begun to be taken increasingly frequently to absurd lengths? Yes, of course the truth is born in arguments, but only on condition that the debate is constructive and is aimed at seeking and optimizing the options for resolving urgent problems.

What are the main reasons why the good plans which you and I approved and for which we voted together have not produced results? And where are the ways out of the present situation?

In my view, a real separation of legislative, executive, and judicial power has not happened at all levels, starting with the Union and ending with city, rayon, and village soviets. Moreover, the soviets today are supplanting executive organs and assuming functions not provided for in the Constitution. This has virtually paralyzed the governments of the country and of the republics and local soviet ispolkoms [executive committees]. If examples are needed, I, like everyone seated in

the hall, can cite many of them. I will say one thing: Is it really appropriate for USSR Supreme Soviet committees and commissions to invite numerous officials to examine the question of supplying sewn goods enterprises with accessories and supplying knitted goods enterprises with yarn, instead of engaging in lawmaking?

The situation is still worse at the level of the republics and local soviets. I will say bluntly that it is simply impossible to work. Of course, there is lawmaking at the level of the USSR Supreme Soviet, and in the republics too. But what are local soviets to do? Just distribute resources and apartments, and so on? This is why a struggle is being waged between the ispolkoms and the soviets. This question was raised back in September, and it must somehow be resolved and finally settled.

Our proposal is that it is necessary to strictly observe constitutional provisions and establish that soviets of all levels should intervene in the activities of executive and administrative power only in the event of the nonfulfillment of adopted laws. It is our profound conviction that otherwise there can be no question of any strong executive power, including presidential power.

Despite numerous declarations, there has been no separation of functions vertically, above all between the republics and the center. It is this that is the cause of the "laws war" and the clash of sovereignties. The republics' proclaimed independence is increasingly coming into conflict with the inertia of the center, which refuses to realize that the republics' sovereignty is an objective reality. No one intends to turn from this path.

Of course, there will be some contradictions not just between the center and the republics but also among the republics themselves. And there is no need to fear this. It is necessary to seek ways to resolve the disputes that arise and opportunities to resolve them through negotiation. We saw this during the conclusion of agreements and contracts with fraternal republics for 1991. Therefore we propose to draw a vertical dividing line between ownership and the function of managing it as soon as possible. We realize that this process takes a certain time.

A very difficult year awaits us all in 1991. The rupture of economic ties that has occurred and the lack of contracts are leading to the economy's final collapse. Almost all light and local industrial enterprises in our republic and also throughout the country are now on the verge of a stoppage. There is a shortage of consumer goods, and hundreds of thousands of people could be left without work or wages. Proceeding from this, we believe that an economic agreement for 1991 must be signed between the Union and the republics before this congress concludes its work; a draft of this agreement must be prepared. The president must personally head the work on signing it and then organize the strictest control over its realization. The fate of the plan, the budget, and, in general, the country's whole economy and, most importantly, the normalization of the consumer market totally depend on this.

We certainly cannot agree with the proposal to hold a nationwide referendum on the question of land ownership throughout the country. This problem must be resolved with due regard for the specific conditions in each republic and even individual regions. For example, in our republic with its irrigated agriculture private ownership of land could lead to a fratricidal war. The same can be said of the allocation of orchard and truck garden plots to all who want them. This is, alas, impossible. The thing is that we cannot allocate even plots for the construction of individual houses to all who want them: The free land simply does not exist. In general, it is time to stop adopting normative acts which extend to the whole country, regardless of territories' special features.

The setting of different levels of retail prices for goods in individual republics leads to unchecked speculation, the forced closure of borders, and the restriction of market opportunities. It is right here that the central power must be firm, and all republics and regions must support its efforts. And we urge our colleagues from all sovereign republics to do this.

The inconsistency of decisions on the realization of foreign economic activity does great harm to the economies of the republics and the country. Decisions are adopted which have not been thoroughly thought out and which do not stimulate the interest of enterprises and republics in increasing export opportunities. Good decisions on independent sales of above-plan output or the expansion of border trade have been practically negated by a resolution of the union government. What problems can a republic resolve if it has been set a quota for exchange operations at the level of 0.02 percent of the volume of commodity turnover, or in the sum of 1 million rubles [R]? It takes months and a decision from the highest bodies to obtain a license to sell above-plan output.

However, we know of cases where a republic's government cannot get a license, while some cooperative member obtains it with no particular effort. Naturally, we cannot understand this. We insist on a considerable broadening of the republics' rights to use above-plan output and to increase export quotas. This will help to resolve many of our problems.

In conclusion I wish to urge everyone, regardless of political convictions, to cast aside personal ambitions and pool efforts to stabilize the situation in the country. This is what people expect of us USSR people's deputies. [passage omitted]

A. Dzhumagulov, *chairman of the Kirghiz SSR Council of Ministers, Frunze City (Sulyuktinskiy national-territorial electoral district, Kirghiz SSR):* Esteemed comrade people's deputies! We cannot fail to note that at this grave time the working people together with their bitter words of reproach are also expressing great concern for the fate of perestroyka. Recently a large group of Kirghiz SSR people's deputies together with the working people of the republic's remote mountain rayons called for everything to be done to prevent the return of former times, to prevent the human dignity they have won from being lost. That says a lot. And another thing: People believe and hope that the unconditional execution of the decisions taken by the country's president, M.S. Gorbachev, will be ensured.

I should like to express the will of the USSR people's deputies present here and to say that it would be simply inhuman and unjust to fail to see the rational kernel in the content of the report and the questions raised point by point for consideration and action. Here we can see the principles for departure from the edict system and scope for creation is opened up.

Indeed, we have had many blunders. There has been the absence of a strategy of perestroyka and uncertainty and surprising dilatoriness in eliminating the existing system of management and creating a new one. There has been spinelessness in the struggle against criminal elements and speculators, inconsistency, and failure to take resolute steps in interethnic conflicts and in confrontations between political forces. Of course, this could not fail to lead to empty shelves, chaos and anarchy, and a serious economic and total political crisis.

It is not only the center that is to blame for all this. Such a conclusion would be wrong. Do we in the republics not bear responsibility for the collapse of traditional intereconomic relations, for localistic tendencies and monopolism, for national conflicts? Are we not responsible for the nonexecution of legislative acts locally?

The state of labor discipline and supply discipline is extremely unsatisfactory. Hundreds of units of underdelivered output! For instance, in 11 months the Ukraine has delivered to the republic... one percent of the [planned quantity of] flour. Or Belorussia has completely wrecked deliveries of untanned leather in the fourth quarter of this year and is not concluding contracts for a single square decimeter of leather of the 52 million square decimeters on which we were counting in 1991. Our neighbors have delivered to us only 60-70 percent of the planned quantity of petroleum products and so far no decrees of the president, nor instructions from the USSR Council of Ministers, nor our contracts are, unfortunately, operating. Of course, these are not fraternal mutual business relations. But despite that the republic is ensuring its contract commitments and today we fulfilled the plan for the delivery of meat and meat products to the Union fund.

As a whole we approve the proposals raised in the report. We are in favor of a single economic union—a national economic complex with a new content—in favor of a union of sovereign republics. We are in favor of a single market with a consideration for special features and initial conditions.

I should like to voice several other thoughts. Of course, even with presidential power we need a powerful operating supreme executive organ—a government, a cabinet of ministers headed by a prime minister answerable to the president and approved by the Supreme Soviet. This organ will not encroach on the president's executive and management functions. On the contrary, it will relieve the president of a million current affairs. For the cabinet to be fully responsible for the state of affairs it needs full rights and a certain autonomy in resolving questions. In our republic the president and the Supreme Soviet have received them.

To this day it is unclear on the basis of what principles and with the aid of what mechanism the management of establishments of all-Union ownership will be implemented. There is no doubt that the foundations of financial, budget, and credit policy should be determined within the framework of the Union. But the republics as sovereign states, proceeding from these foundations, must have the right to pursue their own independent policy, otherwise it will be hard to emerge from the crisis.

That applies particularly to the taxation policy. In our view we should specify clearly that tax policy is the independent business of the republic as a sovereign state. The implementation of all-Union programs and the fulfillment of the powers delegated to the Union must be differentiated depending on the republic's initial positions by at least two to three years.

Next—prices. One of the reasons for the crisis situation in the country is the blunder over prices. There is a lot of talk at various levels but unfortunately for many years now no resolute actions have been undertaken. In addition the stability of prices has been presented as a service rendered, although in fact they have not been stable, and have failed to stimulate production volume or the quality of the output produced. Endless subsidies and leveling down could not lead to any good. And so the result has been that the gulf of 50-200 percent between purchase wholesale prices on the one hand and retail prices on the other has led to a serious imbalance in the budget. This gulf should have been eliminated at least one or two years or even three years ago. There is still time today, and this must be embarked upon, because tomorrow the unpredictable could indeed happen and

we shall be obliged to embark on extreme measures and the replacement of bank notes.

Someone should probably assume full responsibility and carry out this long urgent operation. It will be the first major step toward strengthening the ruble's exchange rate. Of course, the Union government should be this organ. Unfortunately, from the first day the government has been caught in "pincers" and the "blockade" against it should be lifted and we should ultimately learn to respect the government, to help it, and, of course, to criticize it on the basis of its actions. There is no doubt that many troubles in the economy, culture, the social sphere, and consumer services (the retooling of the processing industry in the countryside is lagging behind particularly) depend largely on local organs—on our republic's government. Unfortunately, here we are not completing work and there is much we have not managed to do. It is painful for us to speak of the extremely hard living conditions of hundreds of thousands of shepherds and of the lack of jobs and essentially the unemployment of young people. The republic is provided with less than 30 percent of its needs for children's institutions in rural areas and less than 50 percent of its water pipeline requirements. Hence the high mortality rate among children. The housing provision rate is extremely low and the state of medical and cultural institutions is lamentable. Of course, these questions have been raised and examined many times but unfortunately they are being only poorly resolved.

We are sure that we will not succeed in rapidly emerging from the crisis situation if we continue to treat foreign economic relations with suspicion. In our view it is humiliating to ask for handouts and we must cease this campaign as soon as possible. We believe we must create joint competitive ventures geared to the foreign market, have on-the-job training for leaders of all ranks, and train cadres in all forms of economic management, including under market conditions. There is no shame in learning even from a capitalist, but it is humiliating to ask to be fed, shod, and clothed. We must create really favorable (initially perhaps even preferential) conditions for foreign firms and give them guarantees for investing in our economy. We must introduce order in barter relations but we must not act rashly. Many agreements which have been concluded could be undermine because of our empty pockets and tough credit terms.

In our view it is essential to raise up the people. Ultimately we must rely on the feelings of dignity and pride (as was the case in 1941) and on the fact that Russians, Kirghiz, and all peoples of the USSR are Soviet people.

We must and can work better and live better. We must instill these feelings from the kindergarten, from the school desk, we must boost these feelings in young people. Any meetings, processions, and gatherings should be suspended for two to three years, there should be fewer sessions, and no unnecessary examples should be set, including by us deputies. And perhaps we should declare an emergency situation for a year or 18 months in order to emerge onto the market.

We must unconditionally observe contract discipline and resolutely declare war, yes, war, on absenteeism, stoppages, speculation, the shadow economy, and similar dark deeds, war on those who spread rumors, instill fear, and kindle interethnic hatred.

Esteemed Mikhail Sergeyevich! The people look with great hope at the presidential power that has been instituted. Unless steps are taken immediately to introduce order, it will be very hard and our country will definitively collapse. No one will ever forgive us that. Alone we shall not succeed in implementing the program for transition to the market or the program for building the country. Our strength lies in unity. (Applause). [passage omitted]

S.S. Alekseyev, *chairman of the USSR Constitutional Oversight Committee:* Esteemed comrade people's deputies! I am going to diverge somewhat from the guideline given by the secretariat by not giving a report on the Constitutional Oversight Committee's work—you have all been given the relevant materials.

Recently in the press there have been amicable and, fortunately, polite commentaries on our work. Therefore, I am going to dwell on questions of principle which, I believe, are of decisive significance for our existence and our future.

It seems clear to all of you now that the implementation of fundamental democratic transformations needs a strong and viable state power. Our president's speech was couched in that vein. At the same time we are incapable of rejecting the fundamentally erroneous but entrenched opinion that a strong power is the power of a dictatorship, an authoritarian power. There are definite historical preconditions for this, of course. History teaches us that under certain conditions, when a strong power crosses an invisible boundary it becomes an authoritarian power, sometimes even an absolute one. What is to be done? Not strengthen that power? Then it will be the processes not of paralysis but of the disintegration of power and legality in our country that will intensify and become irreversible.

There is one way out, I think. It is to strengthen our power and increase its effectiveness in the context of the cardinal structural transformations of all the state. I shall dwell on the following, in my view, crucial aspects of those profound structural transformations.

I think that our state must become a state of a civilian

society, a society in which the economic power and the power of ownership belongs not to departments but to producers. We have proclaimed that slogan but it is proving very hard to put into practice. The main cause of perestroyka, without which we cannot resolve any problem—the transformation of ownership—is proving extraordinarily difficult. It is my impression that to some extent there is even a certain regression here. Half measures are being taken and illusory transformations of ownership such as the joint-stock form are appearing.

What is to be done? I think that a declaration on ownership would not be a bad idea. I think that if our congress proclaimed that the means of production will belong to the producer forever, that act would be equivalent to the October Revolution decrees on land, peace, and other fundamental acts.

But I do not think we should stop there. We must elaborate a strict legal mechanism for the transformation of ownership. Strict not in the sense that it is imposed from above but in the sense that it offers legally guaranteed and court-protected access for all producers to the acquisition of property. So that every labor collective has the right to a legally protected transition to the lease system and, having tried the lease for a certain time, the right to transform this property into collective property. Here, too, I want to take issue with Deputy Travkin. It is collective ownership that is now being universally established as the advanced form. It is very important that every producer, every peasant, and every citizen and group of citizens has a legally protected right to acquire land for productive labor.

Finally, and this is a very significant factor, it is necessary to establish a strict, if you like, criminal responsibility for those who prevent labor collectives, citizens, and groups of citizens from obtaining property for productive labor. In that case, I believe, our citizens will acquire the most important thing which constitutes the essence of democracy—economic freedom, economic power, which is now monopolized by the state. And then the state, freed from the excessive burdens of ownership which are beyond its capacity to bear, will become the state of a civilian society, a state which will establish peace, accord, and the coordination of our life.

The second crucial feature: I think that our state should become a legal state [gosudarstvo prava]. Not simply subordinated to the laws (laws may differ, there can be antidemocratic laws), it must be a legal state—in the highest sense—the only instrument in the world capable of preventing power from developing into an authoritarian power. Consequently we are dealing with the supremacy of law in society. This means first and foremost that the Constitution is sacred. The Constitution may become old, some of its tenets may become outdated, but the Constitutional principle exists. And if a society that loses faith becomes a society entering a stage of savagery, the society that has lost its pivot in the form of the Constitution enters a stage of barbarism.

The next feature—the supremacy of the law: I think that the supremacy of the law means the prevention of unilateral actions by individuals, associations, and other entities. The supremacy of the law also means that arbitrary rule, high-handed actions, and lawlessness are excluded from society. The triumph of the law means that justice becomes the supreme power in society. And finally the triumph of the law means mankind's undoubted achievement of the present era—namely absolute, indestructible, unconditionally absolute and unconditionally indestructible human rights. Here I would say nevertheless that it is in this very direction that the Constitutional Oversight Committee is consistently striving to shape its activity. [passage omitted]

R.M. Khudaybergenova, *chairman of Khorezm Oblast Soviet, Urgench City (Khivinskiy National-Territorial Electoral District, Uzbek SSR):* [passage omitted]

I believe that this is what we should do: approve measures to overcome the crisis and in our own localities monitor their implementation on each point and strictly call to account all those who flout the program. That is the first point.

Second, it is necessary to work for the consolidation of society and the reconciliation of the peoples. Indeed, no matter who we are—democrats or constructivists, Communists or populists, military or nonmilitary—we are all citizens of a single country. Enough of tearing it apart to suit individual, party, or any other ambitions. Let us stop all the waffle and devote our efforts to the organizational side of the matter. The need for this is being grasped by an increasing number of deputies, including representatives of the so-called radical wing who have addressed our congress. They too are calling for unification and consolidation. This rapprochement of positions is symptomatic.

Now I would like to dwell on those parts of the president's report which raise certain questions. First: Why did it not give an analysis of the fulfillment of past congress decisions? Second: Why for the umpteenth time did we not hear the actual names of the specific officials who made mistakes in their work? And third: Why did M.S. Gorbachev say virtually nothing about the measures that the country's leadership is going to take to stabilize the economic situation? This particularly worries the inhabitants of Uzbekistan's Khorezm Oblast, Turkmenistan's Karakalpak and Tashauz Oblasts, and Kazakhstan's Kzyl-Orda Oblast, where in all around 4 million people live. [passage omitted]

N.N. Panov, *commander of an An-26 of the Pskov Combined Air Detachment (Pskovskiy Territorial Electoral*

District, Pskov Oblast): I did not ask to speak (they must have muddled it up), so I will speak impromptu. [passage omitted]

The socialist society did not begin to collapse only today or even yesterday, it began to collapse immediately after 1917, when the ideologists, half-educated people as they were, came to power and as a result led us to the present day.

I would like to dwell on M.S. Gorbachev's words, when he said that we have shaken the foundations of the administrative command system. That is not true. Mikhail Sergeyevich, look around you: The administrative command system has today has become stronger than ever. Imaginary contests are held in the localities, at which people are pushed into certain posts not on the basis of their capabilities or practical qualities, but because they belong to the nomenklatura and the party.

We say that the multiparty system does not represent progress, but that is not true either. By the laws of nature, oppositions exist everywhere. In physics there is the law of differing potentials, in chemistry there are bodies and antibodies, positively and negatively charged. I think it will be progress for our society when it is laid down that healthy rivalry between parties can exist. Why? Because if you "clear away" all the contradictions, our society will be dead. In this connection I reject the assertions of many CPSU leaders who say that certain destructive forces are hampering our society's development. In that case let us name these destructive forces, so that our people can eventually understand and say whom specifically we must fight. [passage omitted]

Radio Coverage of 18 Dec Sessions

WA0501120990

For Moscow Domestic Service recorded coverage of the 18 December session of the Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies, see the 19 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 18, column one.
For the speech by CPSU Central Committee secretary Valentin Falin see the 21 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 31, column one.

19 December

Speeches from Morning Session Reported

PM2112163390 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Dec 90 Union Edition pp 4-11

[Continuation of the "Stenographic Record of Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies", this section covers from the final stages of the 18 December morning session through 19 December morning session]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted]

Fifth Sitting

Kremlin Palace of Congresses, 19 December 1990, 1000 hours.

A.I. Lukyanov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, is in the chair. [passage omitted]

G.K. Kryuchkov, *adviser to the Ukrainian SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] Council of Ministers (Razdelnyanskiy Territorial Electoral District, Odessa Oblast):* Esteemed comrades! Allow me, on the instructions of the secretariat, to present to you the latest report on the organizational side of the work of our congress, which is still, as yet, keeping pace with the approved approximate plan. [passage omitted]

The congress is continuing to receive a large number of letters, telegrams, and telephone calls. Their content indicates that the work of our congress and the proposals submitted for its examination on stabilizing the situation in the country are still at the center of attention for Soviet people and broad strata of the foreign public.

Most of the messages support the basic provisions of the report and say that in their efforts to lead the country out of the crisis our president and the country's leadership can count on the support of society's healthy patriotic forces committed to the cause of socialist renewal. Although I must say frankly, comrades, there are many comments of a different kind too, some of them severely negative. Some comrades think that not all the proposals in the report are sufficiently detailed, especially when it comes to the competence of the new organizational structures. People are expressing the wish for M.S. Gorbachev to expound them more concretely in his concluding speech.

People are also noting that many speeches at the congress lack a constructive basis. As one telegram said, they contain a great deal of self-torment and destructive revelations and show the desire to make an impact, but that is not what is needed today, we already have nothing left that is sacred.

What worries the working people most? Perhaps the question of whether the planned measures will produce real results, or whether it will once again boil down to yet more reorganizations and reshuffles, moving the same people to different leadership structures. Whether our laws, the president's decrees, and government decisions will at last be fulfilled, whether the destructive activity of extremist, nationalist, antisocialist forces will be stopped. Whether the central and local authorities are

capable of preserving the established rational economic links between enterprises, sectors, regions, and republics and preventing the total collapse of the economy next year, the disruption of the entire system of material and technical supply, and consequently the cessation of work at many production facilities, falling wages, and the emergence of an army of unemployed.

The working people demand the adoption of effective and, if necessary, emergency measures to ensure the normal functioning of vitally important sectors and enterprises. They demand the resolute stamping out of organized crime, speculation, corruption, theft, violence against the person, acts of vandalism, and mass disorders.

Great anxiety is expressed over the fate of our Union and the integrity of the USSR. The conviction is growing that if we permit the dissolution of the Soviet Union we will be making a mistake that neither present nor future generations of Soviet people will forgive.

A striking feature is the sharply negative reaction of the majority of citizens writing to the congress to the "relish" with which certain mass media are covering the arrival of charitable aid from abroad. While expressing gratitude to the citizens of foreign countries and valuing their kind feelings, many of our people think that the propaganda campaign that has been launched over this aid is insulting to the Soviet people, especially since the food supply difficulties are caused to a significant degree not by a shortage of food, but by the inability of the authorities centrally and locally, especially locally, to organize things, to gather and preserve the crop that has been grown, to prevent the squandering and spoiling of food, and to organize smooth-running supplies. Some people are not above making political capital out of this, and all kinds of speculators are simply getting rich by robbing our people.

I must say frankly, comrades: The tone and content of the mail and the urgency of the views expressed are so serious that in our opinion the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium should analyze it in depth after the congress and draw the necessary conclusions in all areas of work.

The secretariat is continuing to receive messages from people's deputies on various questions. A large number of them are addressed to the main speaker. They contain some 200 concrete proposals. They are all handed over promptly to Comrade M.S. Gorbachev. A significant proportion of the messages contain concrete, interesting proposals on the draft documents that are to be adopted at the congress. They are handed over to the relevant editorial commissions. A number of questions are addressed to the government. N.I. Ryzhkov will obviously reply to some of them in his speech. At the request of groups of USSR people's deputies, under our standing orders, a number of documents have been issued to all the people's deputies.

The secretariat deems it necessary to report specifically on one question. As you know, yesterday some of the people's deputies from the Moldova SSR ostentatiously left the congress hall of sessions, accusing the secretariat of failing to satisfy their demands. What is at issue here?

A group of people's deputies from the Moldova SSR—Comrades Burduzhan, Snegur, Andreyev, and others (39 signatures in all)—put forward a demand for the immediate adoption at the congress of a resolution on unconstitutional activity to dismember the Moldova SSR, referring to the formation of the so-called Dnestr and Gagauz Republics on the territory of the sovereign Moldova SSR. The said group of people's deputies declared that their continued participation in the work of the congress depended on how that question is resolved. At the same time another group of deputies from the same republic (Comrades Palagnyuk, Pashaly, Kostishin) demanded that the Congress decide the question of the formation of the Dnestr and Gagauz Republics. The situation is, as you can see, very complex and confusing. The secretariat could not, of course, act hastily in this matter or shift the emphasis in any way.

After a thorough exchange of opinions the members of the Secretariat came to the common conclusion that the situation that has taken shape in the Moldova SSR must be studied carefully and without prejudice, and, most importantly, everything must be done to prevent a further exacerbation of the situation, because blood has already been shed there, there have been casualties. For these reasons the Secretariat considers it inexpedient to propose that the congress launch a debate on this question. We think the USSR Supreme Soviet should do this, first and foremost the Soviet of Nationalities.

Incidentally, Comrade Burduzhan, people's deputy from the Moldova SSR, who signed the first of these appeals and is himself a member of the Secretariat, agreed to these proposals.

The formulation of the findings of the Secretariat on this question was agreed with him. Unfortunately, some of the people's deputies, not deeming it necessary even to discuss the matter, left the congress. We sincerely regret that. We are convinced that such actions will not help to stabilize the situation in the republic. I must say that we have just received a letter (22,000 signatures) from the republic, speaking of serious concern over the situation there.

At the same time the Secretariat believes that in the light of this situation the country's leadership should again meet with all the USSR people's deputies from the Moldova SSR, discuss the problem as a whole, and try to

find a mutually acceptable solution that meets the vital interests of all peoples and citizens of all nationalities living in the republic. [passage omitted]

V.P. Fokin, *chairman of the Ukrainian SSR Council of Ministers (Lisichanskiy National-Territorial Districts, Ukrainian SSR):* Esteemed comrade president, esteemed colleagues! I once heard from Academician Glushkov—may he be remembered well—that all major transformations in public life have five mandatory stages: hulabaloo, muddle, quest for a culprit, punishment of the innocent party, and, lastly, reward for the uninvolved. In the five years of perestroyka we seem to have reached the third stage—the quest for a culprit. This quest is being conducted in an excited, nervous atmosphere which does not facilitate the adoption of sensible, well-considered decisions. It is not for nothing that it is said: "Look back in anger." Tell me, have any of the speakers confirmed their right to criticize by suggesting their own well-founded program for escaping from the crisis on which Deputy Alksnis insisted during the first day of the congress sitting? No. But let us investigate this calmly.

The president's report, certainly, did not satisfy everyone. It does not contain either super-extraordinary measures or a detailed mechanism to implement them. However, render under God the things that are God's and unto Caesar the things that are Ceasar's. It is, after all, well-known that a poor musician can ruin a good score. The president is not to blame for the empty stores and the exorbitant prices in the markets. And "separatist" republics are not to blame for Muscovites' sufferings. Those who have let their potatoes rot and are buying up potatoes abroad with our—I stress our—common currency should not evade responsibility. (Applause)

That is why, comrades, I am convinced that most deputies approved the president's desire to establish strict order, strengthen authority and discipline, and assert legality. I also think that few people doubt the need to create a Security Council that would be invested with responsibility for the state of national relations and the normalization of the environmental situation. The latter is particularly important for the peoples of the Ukraine who have gone through the Chernobyl tragedy. One can argue about, say, the advisability of governing the country with the help of the Council of the Federation. But, forgive me, only a fool can fail to realize that the formation of a Union of sovereign republics on the ruins of a unitary power is a conditioned and logical process. In short, you have to be objective; these proposals do, after all, reflect the President's viewpoint and I think that they coincide with the majority opinion.

But at the same time, esteemed colleagues, I understand the asperity, the pain, and sometimes even despair that was voiced in the speeches by Comrades Nazarbayev, Karimov, Dolganov, etc. We cannot govern the country like that. Political nihilism is a dangerous thing. Economic nihilism is doubly dangerous, since it inevitably results in the line between democratization and anarchy being eroded. No, Esteemed M.S. Gorbachev, it is not "partisan"—to use your expression—actions or republic separatism that have brought about the destruction of the unified national economic complex. It was not us who devised appanage principality-style economic accountability for every settlement and village which—multiplied by groundless autonomy for enterprises—led to the collapse not only of rational but also of simply vitally necessary economic ties. That is the fruit of the activity of our renowned economists who have an inexplicable—sometimes hypnotic—influence over the country's leadership.

The hitherto unprecedented problem of stabilizing the economy was the logical result of precisely these processes; it is as if it is a question of eliminating the consequences of years of destructive warfare. It is my profound conviction that the only effective means of countering this ailment is to establish and develop comprehensive horizontal ties between the republics. We did not embark on this straightaway. As is our habit, we waited for a long time for instructions from the center and it was only when we sensed the chill of impending catastrophe that we were forced to rush into one another's arms. Over the last two weeks the Ukraine has signed 12 agreements with Union republics regulating virtually all contentious issues and opening the way to the conclusion of contracts between enterprises.

What about the government? The center at first remained idle in confusion, then suddenly remembered itself, and felt out of things during the formation of semifinished material and raw material resources on whose distribution it had hitherto held a monopoly. Menacing growls, pressure, and charges of disrupting the country ensued. We categorically reject this slander because it is being spread around by those leaders who—to put it mildly—have slept through the treaty campaign and who have on their conscience responsibility for the disastrous situation in which thousands of enterprises have found themselves.

The danger has still not passed. Contrary to all logic and common sense, citing the President's decree on urgent measures to stabilize economic ties, the USSR Gossnab [State Committee for Material and Technical Supply] (Comrade Mostovoy) has begun to urgently change partner suppliers and sever habitual ties that had existed for years. While meanwhile reproaching the republics for usurping the Union's rights and for lack of supply discipline. But tell me, what normal person would agree to export output in short supply from a republic in exchange for frequent promises of imported deliveries that have not been confirmed by real treaties?

Esteemed comrades! Oppressed by present-day problems, one remembers with increasing frequency the

words of the brilliant Russian financier, Nikolay Ivanovich Turgenev, who wrote that a state's rulers must have a sound knowledge of political economy and every government that fails to understand or scorns the rules of all science must perforce perish due to finances. These words are more topical than ever today. All our troubles are rooted in our financial and budgetary bedlam. Both the Union as a whole and the overwhelming majority of the republics have lived and—which is particularly terrible—are continuing to live beyond their means.

Judge for yourselves. This year the Supreme Soviet stipulated a maximum issue of 10 billion rubles [R], but the government has organized things so that R23 billion or even R25 billion have been issued to date. The Ukraine is the only one of all the republics not only to have not permitted emissions but to have removed roughly R2 billion from circulation. Won't it pain us after this if we enter the new year with a republic budget deficit of R12 billion. Our agrarian workers came under unprecedented pressure yesterday from an unwarranted demand for an increase in meat, milk, and sugar deliveries to union stocks. Comrade Voronin has done the same thing today. Well, he can order me about, but how does he intend to persuade kolkhozes and sovkhozes to give up their produce, by offering them 20 and 70 percent of the estimated required amounts of agricultural equipment and mineral fertilizers respectively? Can you interest a peasant in surrendering his produce by this method of requisitioning? It is finally time for the leaders of the central apparatus to learn the truism of a market economy that you can never force a real master to do anything against his interests. Esteemed N.I Ryzhkov, you and your assistants were unable to set up an effective system of state economic management, so don't prevent us from doing this and instead back the republics' desire for autonomy in resolving economic questions. Otherwise no strong-arm pressure, no orders, and entreaties will result in the stabilization of the situation. (Applause)

I back the report's proposal that the structures of executive organs be reorganized. (Applause) [passage omitted]

G.F. Lezhenko, *member of the USSR Supreme Soviet (Krivorozhskiy National-Territorial Electoral District, Ukrainian SSR):* Esteemed people's deputies! I am one of the people who do not often get the chance to speak from this rostrum. I am a miner, 40 years old and I have already worked underground for 20 years. Life has not been easy: Work is hard in the mine, and there has been danger. But never have I felt so downhearted as now. I have recently felt as if I was at a funeral.

Six years of perestroyka and there has been no progress. Is Stalin to blame, are the structures bad? No! Now there are other, subjective reasons. In 18 months there have been four changes of structure. What has this given us? The country is on the brink of starvation and collapse. There has never been such a situation before! The reasons for this are the desire to change the socialist system and the struggle for power and for the preservation of capital obtained by dishonest means. And on top of all this—like a czar's crown—is the growth of every possible type of crime.

The reason for this is to some extent all of our irresponsibility. I look at your hall, and the emotions and outbursts that sometimes occur here, and I honestly feel terrible. I feel terrible because we are losing our responsibility to our electorate. I do not want to offend anyone but I understand that Deputy Kasyan is a doctor and has taken the Hippocratic oath. I understand that hunger is very serious. I would probably not last more than three days without food, with all my 20 years of experience underground. But while we have put up with a great deal, nevertheless we have been fed. It is a shame that Doctor Kasyan, who is respected by everyone, only knows how to set fractures. It would be good if he learned to put brains right too. He would be priceless. (Applause)

Another reason for today's economic and political situation in the country is probably that the people cannot see the truth and they do not know whom to follow. B.N. Yeltsin and Comrade Obolenskiy made their speeches before me. And I remembered the 7 November demonstration—the one that all the people welcomed. I reacted to it with delight, I honestly did. I watched another demonstration which was shown on Leningrad television, and there was no limit to my indignation.

You, too, were at the first party demonstration, Boris Nikolayevich, and you greeted the whole country and those who marched under the banner of Lenin, those who believe in the party and its people's deputies. And after that there was a demonstration where people demanded "Pillory the CPSU," where you could see on the banners insults that you could not read calmly. And esteemed Boris Nikolayevich, it turns out that you were both in Red Square, in Staraya Square, and outside the Moskva Hotel. And everything is immediately shown on television. I don't know, maybe the government members and people on the platform who attended the demonstrations do not watch television, but it showed the very same people greeting both demonstrations. Does this mean that there are two truths? No, there is no such thing as two truths. There is one truth and the people need it. (Applause)

I read in the appeal from the interregional deputies group to the congress that housing must be sold for private ownership. Little has been done in six years of perestroyka to increase the production of bricks or, for instance, reinforced concrete slabs so that we can construct more, and yet we are already selling housing. People get apartments for R15,000-16,000 and then go abroad. They then sell them for R100,000-200,000. Foreign citizens pay $50,000 a year for apartments. I

have never actually held those dollars in my hand but I know that in our money this is R1 million at speculative prices. So what happens is that people waiting for housing from the state never get it, while people who wait for millionaires to buy them can welcome them with open arms.

Let me broach the subject of the dishonor to which the CPSU has recently been subjected. How can this be, esteemed Comrade Travkin? I followed the same path as you, after all. I was a worker and a team-leader. My work colleagues and I have three all-Union records under our belts. And you have just as many, no doubt. So, these records were established under the banner of Lenin, you graduated from your institute under the banner of Lenin, and you received a Hero of Socialist Labor's star. And now you dishonor the party.... You can fight the party, I am not against this. I am not against other parties. But do not fight me, or the people. And do not spit on my party membership card. Respect your party—respect it! (Applause)

I believe that leaving one party that is currently in a critical situation and transferring to another one is treachery. (Applause)

Structural changes are now taking place. Esteemed Mikhail Sergeyevich, you have A.N. Yakovlev as your adviser. In general I have no complaints about him. But I do recall that he assisted in dishonoring the party and the socialist system in the initial period. With whom do you plan to work? (Applause)

Another important factor—money incomes—dictates the differences of opinion in the choice of programs and ways of resolving the economic and political crisis in the country. It has been known for a long time that a well-fed man will not understand a hungry man. Remember how many times the proposal to introduce income declarations was voiced from this rostrum. So put this question to the vote and we will see who is for capitalism and who is for socialism in this hall. (Applause)

How long will the working people feed dogmatists, careerists, partocrats, and bureaucrats, who are being criticized so much here! And now democrats too!

Esteemed Mikhail Sergeyevich! If you do not make the laws work, if there is no administrative, financial, and criminal responsibility for the nonobservance of laws and for torpedoing normal life in the country, the people will not trust us. Otherwise only the trappings will remain of the glasnost, democracy, and perestroya in which the people believed so much. You can see that the lessons of history did not benefit some people at all. So I recall. The workers and peasants have had, do have, and will continue to have the last word. So let us not push them too far. And, like in all developed countries, let us move toward unity together with the people through love and justice. (Applause) [passage omitted]

PRAVDA Carries Ryzhkov 19 Dec Speech

LD1912144190 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 20 Dec 90 Second Edition p 3

[Speech by USSR Premier Nikolay Ivanovich Ryzhkov at 19 December session of the Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies in the Kremlin in Moscow: "Responsibility and Concord." The Moscow Domestic Service version was published in the 20 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 22, column two, under the headline "Ryzhkov Addresses People's Deputies."]

[Text] Comrade people's deputies! Over recent weeks I have repeatedly come back to the thought of what to come to this rostrum with, should such a possibility be offered. For the fate of the government in the form which it has existed in our state is predetermined. We are to experience one of the most radical reforms of the supreme executive power in accordance with the amendments to the USSR Constitution.

My decision to address you, however, has not been prompted by this circumstance. I simply do not have the right to keep silent, as I, along with other members of the political and state leadership, carry immense responsibility for everything that takes place in the country. Therefore I will speak with the utmost frankness, reckoning that our thoughts, appraisals, and vision of a way out of the situation which has taken shape will, to a certain extent, be useful.

I will begin from the fact that we have not succeeded in implementing perestroyka in the form—I emphasize this—in the form in which it was conceived. As one of its initiators, I unconditionally consider myself responsible for this. If a government crisis, a change of cabinet, could remedy the situation, then the government would have resigned as early as May of this year. But it is all a lot more serious. Those political forces which have started an "undeclared war" against the government have far-reaching aims. These aims stem directly from the idea of changing the essence of the changes which we have started.

Just as this war did not boil down last May to throwing out the government, today it does not boil down to a war against the president, the Supreme Soviet, and the Congress of USSR People's Deputies.

Its main aim is to inflict a blow on the state, on the sociopolitical system, and to smash it forever. Not only the Soviet Union as a whole, but also many republics, both large and small, whose statehood and social system have also found themselves under the most serious

threat, are being put at stake in this game. In such a situation I cannot restrict myself merely to establishing the failure of the reform process. What is essential here is a ruthless analysis, not of the particulars, not of details, but of the entire complex of reasons for this failure.

I.

In 1985 we posed the task of restructuring, the content and aim of which we named as the renewal of socialism and the overcoming of deformations that had been allowed to occur. But it didn't manage to maintain this position under the influence of destructive forces, many of which, as at present, quite evidently aim to change the nature of the social system. This was done under the guise of a rejection of the ideology of socialism, but in actual fact it was the replacement of one ideology with another.

In this regard I would like to speak of the correlation between ideology, politics, and the economy. Where are the causes, and where are the effects here? You know that in our society the supremacy of ideology over everything else did in fact always occur. This had a direct effect on the decision-making mechanism. I intend to harshly pinpoint the mistakes which I made, both as chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and as former member of the Politburo. I am not even sure that that mechanism could have been broken so quickly without having something with which to replace it. I simply want to be as objective as possible in analyzing the situation. We have not succeeded, and I don't know whether it was possible for us in the course of deepening the reform, in achieving the priority of the economy over ideology and politics. Such is the society in which we live.

You can criticize and ridicule it as much as you like, but it was impossible to live in it without adhering to its laws, or change it without an understanding of its nature and its essence. The priority of ideology over the economy is not a trifle, not a detail, not voluntarism, not the stupidity of some leaders or other—it is the essence of the model in which we lived. It is its mainstay. The nature of our system is such that the current crisis in the economy has been generated not by an aggravation of internal contradictions in the production sphere but by an evident crisis in politics, ideology, and administration. We are trying to treat not the disease but its symptoms.

It is already obvious that ideology, but now a different one, is again looming over economic reforms. Under the flag of the market a political war has broken out. It is devoid of serious economic content. In this sense our so-called left radical economists are the same ideologists and propagandists, only turned inside out. The result is criticism without limits, destruction of the executive power, populism, and incompetence.

The political and ideological undermining of perestroyka, which was supported by the whole people in 1985-86, has been achieved by a composition of forces with different, sometimes opposing, interests and ideals. On the surface we can see only the actions of the conservatives, who for various reasons are hindering a change in the social and political order, and the actions of the radicals, who are yearning for all the structures of our society to be dismantled as quickly as possible. Both the one side and the other have distorted the transformation process by their actions, although for a short period they have presented themselves as allies of perestroyka.

Yet more important, I believe, is the position of the "silent majority" of the population. This position has changed radically over five years, from enthusiasm to mistrust and scepticism. This can be explained to a large extent by the erosion of its aims and the creation of illusions about speedy benefits from their implementation.

Indeed, we did not reveal a model for the future, we did not name the social price which will have to be paid for the implementation of this model, and we did not define who would pay and how to compensate those who bore the losses.

Yet world experience of reform shows that every act of restructuring has to be paid for. Time is needed to create new structures. A creative transition toward them in our conditions is only possible if we carry out extremely well-thought out and systemic reforms. The scale of the country and the complex of natural laws which have taken shape over the decades do not make it possible to use "shock therapy" here. It is sufficient to take just one imprudent step—to deprive society of some social guarantees of other—and this will inevitably cause a social explosion. The government could not fail to take this into account, for which we are still being accused of conservatism. But it is on the basis of these realities that we have made our proposals on the improvement of the economy and the transition to the market.

Any project—revolutionary or reformist—has its own logic. A revolution takes on itself an obligation to society not to permit a vacuum, and to replace broken structures with new ones.

What has actually happened? Perestroyka has broken many established structures, both state and party ones. Yet so far nothing efficient and effective has been created to replace them. This has been directly reflected in the economy, where there is now neither plan nor market.

We have still not managed to compensate on a new

democratic basis for the weakening of the mechanisms of power. In spite of the fact that at the beginning of the year the institution of president was introduced into the system of state power in the country, no noticeable changes have happened in the country. Furthermore, many of the vertical structures of the executive power have ceased functioning in the same period. In this lies the root of the basic troubles that have led to those negative phenomena which have recently started to appear acutely in the economy, in the area of law and order, in interethnic relations, and in the moral state of society.

All this has encouraged expansionism of the breeding grounds of crime, everything has gone wild. Against the background of measures to strengthen law and order, which indeed did need strengthening, a campaign developed to compromise and discredit staff of the militia and the procuracy who were honestly doing their duty. This could not fail to influence them, instilling a spirit of apathy and of lack of faith in justice. If we do not stop this flywheel, then it could cause a crime wave such as will sweep away all efforts to combat it.

The single-minded defamation has also affected the Army. Calls are to be heard to parcel it out between the republics. But history bears witness that our state did not become a mighty one as long as forces were disunited. The way history worked out, our attitude to the army has been a special one, one of respect, and no discreditation whatsoever is tolerable here.

Our culture, too, is suffering blows of the political and economic crisis. The store shelves will fill up eventually; but will our souls not be emptied?

Such, in brief, are some of the reasons, in my view, for the undermining of the process of perestroyka. But today, in the current contradictory situation, I would like to speak in particular about Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev. The very idea of perestroyka is connected with his name, and I see not just his mistakes, but also his immense contribution to the cause of rousing the country and to the start of radical change in our society. I believe in the ultimate success of perestroyka just as I did on its first day. I believe that we shall create a healthy, strong society, a free and mighty state. That is why I separate Gorbachev's doctrine and its strategic aims from the tactical mistakes in its implementation, both in the higher echelons of power and at all levels of administration.

II.

Comrade deputies! Of course my vision of the situation in the country comes through the prism of the economy. That is natural. As is well known, the USSR Council of Ministers is the link in the administration of the state where all the information flows really do come together. And the government, not because it has some special kind of perspicacity, but because of its place in the system of provision of information, is best capable of providing an integrated view of the situation that has come about and of its possible consequences. Everything that has happened in the country in the past years is directly reflected in its economy. The political cycles in the development of society have caused the same cycle in economic life.

There is clear evidence of this in the difference between the results for the first three years of the 5-year plan period and the results of the last two years. In the former period, we managed to attain stable rates of economic growth, and to make substantial progress in resolving acute problems such as construction of housing, schools, and hospitals. And the consumer market, despite all the cost of the ill-conceived anti-alcohol campaign, looked different.

A watershed took clear shape in 1989.

Two factors have disrupted the economy simultaneously: a large-scale, but not fully worked-out mechanism for transition of the national economy to new principles, haste and errors in the choice of instruments for the control of economic processes, and the drastic growth in political and social instability in the state. The economy has not withstood this and has responded with recession. As a result we have not only not managed to escape from the pre-crisis situation, but on the contrary, we have encountered an unprecedented drop in production. Thus, in 1990 as compared with the previous year, the produced national income went down by four percent, labor productivity by three percent, and money issue was double the planned level and will come to 22-24 billion rubles [R].

The consumer market is out of balance. The growth of incomplete construction projects beyond the norm is estimated at R25 billion. At the same time there has been a reduction in the commissioning of housing and social-cultural facilities projects. Obligatory payments servicing the foreign debt will rise in 1991 to 9 billion foreign currency rubles. Western creditors are refusing to grant us credits on a commercial basis, and the main reason for this lies not so much in the growth of the debt as in our state and political instability. Exports fell by 12 percent while the requirement for foreign currency is increasing.

Although the harvest was a rich one, we are going to have to buy 30 million tonnes of grain, which accounts for 45 percent of the total volume of state purchases.

To maintain the level of consumption in Moscow, Leningrad, and other industrial centers, we must have currency to acquire about 1.5 million tonnes of meat and

more than 12 million tonnes of milk and dairy products. To date the country's enterprises have managed to conclude contracts for the supply of only 60 percent of the products. For those who have specific knowledge of economics, this figure needs no detailed comment. It indicates a very grave disruption in economic ties and possible further recession in production, with all the consequences.

I shall not dwell on the specific tasks of the coming year. I will just say that it is a period of priority development of the agroindustrial complex, of stepping up of production of consumer goods, of a social turnaround in the economy, and of the implementation of major social programs.

III.

Esteemed comrades! If the relevant measures are not adopted without delay, then the initial conditions make it possible to forecast further growth of social tension. The difficulties facing us are diverse. They require that we should clearly determine the tactics for further action. The situation is such that, on some things, we shall have to halt and regroup our forces, while on others we shall have to advance resolutely. First, decisions must be adopted which allow us to avoid an all-union disaster in good time. I shall remark straight away that today we have already missed the moment when it was possible to get on directly with stabilization.

We shall have to pass through the mechanism of an emergency stop to the growing crisis; and we should not fear the costs. Otherwise there will be immeasurably more of them afterward. Of course, this is a forced step, and yet it will make it possible to avoid unpredictable consequences. This stop concerns, primarily, many laws which run counter to the USSR Constitution. We have to renounce the supremacy of laws in its primitive form and introduce a moratorium on the strike movement and on any actions leading to the violation of the operation of the country's unified transport system, to the hasty closure of production facilities for ecological reasons, and to the establishment of internal customs barriers. It is time to understand—and I believe that life has already taught us this—what can happen if there is no stop to the process, ruinous for everyone, of disintegration of discipline in the supply of products. Responsibility for this lies primarily on those who take such decisions.

There are a great many specific proposals. We have to stop arguing with one another and find coordinated solutions and show the political will for their implementation. In my view this is the only way out today. Within the scope of paramount measures for stemming the crisis, it is essential, with all of the means and resources at the disposal of the state and society, to crush crime in all its forms, and especially organized crime. We have to regard this as a prime factor giving rise to a growth in instability and tension in the country. I shall dwell in particular on 1991. Without implementation of the measures cited we shall be unable not only to speak in real terms about a plan and budget for next year, but even to adopt them at the USSR Supreme Soviet. An economic agreement for the coming years between the republics, enabling the growth in the crisis to be stemmed, is to be of fundamental significance here. Only on the basis of this agreement will we be able to achieve mutual understanding and ensure coordinated actions in maintaining the viability of the economy.

This will be a provisional agreement. It makes provision for the retention of established economic ties, the implementation of unified principles of financial and taxation policy, and coordinated actions for pricing reform and the social protection of the population, to which we attach paramount significance in these conditions. This agreement must without fail contain constructive proposals which will be voiced at our congress. It is only a matter of days until the end of December, and we must not allow ourselves to enter the new year without having resolved these issues. We hope that during the first days of January the USSR Supreme Soviet will decide on the plan and budget, and thereby open up the possibility for rapid actions both for the republics and for the union organs of government.

Second, the USSR Council of Ministers, acknowledging its responsibility for the normal functioning of the economy and the social sphere, was forced to embark on decisions connected with the work of the national economy in the first quarter of next year. They are aimed at providing the possibility, prior to approval of the plan and budget, of paying wages to people, and not closing down enterprises. On the basis of the current situation, decisions have also been made on extraordinary measures for the purchase of food, medicine, and a number of other goods and materials abroad, concerning which there was an appropriate decision by the union-republican foreign currency committee.

Of course these decisions by the government can also be criticized as a violation of the established order. But could one fail to take such a step now, when people's work and everyday life directly depend on it?

These and other measures designed to halt the escalation of the crisis should enable us to get into a pattern of stabilization of the national economy. Of course, I realize that these proposals include a number of tough measures in the field of finances, money circulation, control of investments, and of flows of material and technical resources. But these will have to be embarked on because they are dictated by the real situation in the economy. I think that any composition of government cabinet would embark on their implementation on one form or another.

Undoubtedly, everything I have just been talking about

can be implemented on condition of the union republics' confidence in the economic agreement which will be concluded by them. But I repeat that this agreement is a provisional measure. Work on the Union treaty must be persistently continued. Its adoption cannot be dragged out in any circumstances. Delay in the examination of this question and in the final decision on it will signify that we are further and further postponing the possibility of achieving civil peace and accord. Of course, I understand the desire of representatives of some political currents to drag out the signing of the new Union treaty, to get it bogged down in the blather of debate and thereby increase pressure on the Union legislature and on the Supreme Soviets of Union republics. They see that the new Union treaty is primarily a blow to the destructive forces, an opportunity to overcome interethnic strife, to preserve the integrity of our state, to ensure peace and accord in it.

The government has recently been accused of a lack of understanding of the desire of the republics for sovereignty and independence. Categorically rejecting such accusations, I firmly declare that the Council of Ministers has always stood on positions of respect for the republics and their declarations of sovereignty and has seen in them a healthy beginning for strengthening political and economic independence that is not damaging to the state sovereignty of the union as a whole. This is confirmed by the practical actions of the government. Suffice it to recall who started to really hand over to the republics the rights which previously were the prerogatives of the center. This applies to the construction, the agro-industrial complex, and a number of other spheres of the economy.

We have regarded and do regard broadly the concept of parties to the federation, as envisioned in the country's laws which have already been passed. At the same time, we have always been for the preservation of the territorial integrity of the Soviet federation, for its preservation of the socialist choice, of the single economic space, for observance of all rights of citizens and peoples of the USSR throughout the territory of the union.

We consider that the fulfillment of such requirements is a guarantee preventing political, economic, and social upheavals in the country. Firmness is needed here. We should have displayed it earlier, when the fire of interethnic hostility in certain regions was just beginning.

Now that the scale of people's woe is growing more and more, jeopardizing the lives of thousands of innocent people, the need to adopt harsh measures may arise, primarily against those persons and organizations which are prepared to do anything in their fits of ambition. We can still stop. The problem is solvable. The foundations of it are laid in the Union treaty; for that reason, I repeat, it is immoral, criminal even, to postpone the examination and adoption of it further. But the acuteness of the problem of interethnic relations is such that we must not fail to adopt decisions right now. This is our common concern, it affects the interests of all republics, and for that reason the role and influence in this matter of a collective body such as the Council of the Federation must be enhanced.

The report by the country's president gives special attention to radical changes in the structure of state power. These affect the Constitution of the country, and are intended to radically influence the situation which has formed today in the economy and in the state. It is understandable that these are very responsible decisions which cannot be examined apart from the situation in the country. Otherwise things might be limited just to changes in the superstructure, the very top level. Once again there will be those who speculate on the theme of repainting of facades. In other words, these proposals and the implementation of them must be backed up by a strengthening of executive power and the restoration of a mechanism of cosubordination of all power structures in the country. Naturally, this should be implemented in the framework of the delimitation of powers between the center, the republics, and local areas. In a nutshell, the issue is ripe, but in implementing such a serious step, we must bear in mind that we are taking it in conditions where there is no Union treaty, where the situation in the country is catastrophic, and here we must weigh things up 10 times, and evaluate how such a radical reform of central power may turn out, ask whether we are by this token getting ahead of the Union treaty, which is intended to dot all the i's regarding the powers and responsibilities of the Union republics and the center.

I am not in favor of conservation of the present structure in management of the economy, and whatever can be and needs to be done must be done. But the innovations which are to be implemented must not contain the slightest departure from existing realities. I shall speak in particular about the relationship between legislative and executive powers, about the need to delineate their functions. The acuteness of the problem, as was shown by the past year, continues to grow. The mixing up of these functions, has, in essence, deprived executive power at all levels of the opportunity to act quickly and vigorously. The government that I head has constantly been accused of indecisiveness and of a lack of firmness and consistency. But could we act effectively in the framework of our powers, if we were put in conditions where it has been necessary, even in day-to-day issues, to keep looking over our shoulder at the committees and commissions of the Supreme Soviet? If such a situation is created around the new cabinet of ministers it is unlikely that it will be able to fulfill the hopes placed in it.

A program to avert the troubles of our country must cast off all ideological and political nuances. Let ideological claims and counter-claims be brought up only once we have moved away from the edge of the precipice. The

main thing today is to do everything to maintain the tenacity of the national economy and thereby protect people from the social shocks that are raining down on them more and more.

This is where the guarantee of survival and the guarantee of the salvation of society lie today. All those who will unite around this idea must be together. If we do not do this, then blocking the destructive processes and stabilizing the economy will remain empty words.

In drawing up some kind of conclusion to what I have said, I want to stress yet again that the country needs order, or at least some breathing space. We can and must strive for it not by shouting and compulsion, but by concrete work, which will be extremely complex and difficult. It will demand huge efforts, will, and genuine truth in our evaluations. It is only then that it will have a result. It is only then that these people will understand and support it.

Comrade deputies! People are expecting a lot from us. Let us justify their hopes.

Speeches From Afternoon Session Reported

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[Continuation of the "Stenographic Record of Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies," this section covers the final stages of the 19 December afternoon session through end of 20 December proceedings]

[Excerpts]

Sixth Sitting

Kremlin Palace of Congress, 1600 hours, 19 December 1990. [passage omitted] **V.M. Semenov,** *first secretary of Grodno Oblast Belorussian Communist Party Committee [obkom] (Grodnenskiy Territorial Electoral District, Grodno Oblast):* Esteemed President M.S. Gorbachev's rousing [zazhigayushchiy], emotional speech made a definite impression on me, as it surely did on many of you. To use his words, I would say "an equivocal impression" in response to the question "What kind of impression?" On the one hand, everyone who has expressed approaches that do not coincide with the president's own approaches to extricating the country from the crisis got it in the neck. On the other hand, I did not hear a response to the following question: How will we escape from this crisis, which was the reason for convening the Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies?

As a member of the Planning, Budget, and Financial Commission, I am worried above all by what we will do with the budget, Mikhail Sergeyevich? After your speech our commission may be wound up—and there will be no budget. All your promises of enriching culture, keeping "scientific brains" at home so that they do not leave, your flirting with students by increasing grants, and so on will produce nothing. There was a "hole" in the budget and it will grow even bigger after authorization has been given for complete sovereignty... primarily in the economic sphere.

The republics, including the Russian Federation, have now decided to turn their backs on the Union budget and leave us naked and guilty to face all the people's deputies. We did not receive an answer to this question either: How will we live after 1 January 1991? I shall return home and say—not as a commission member any longer but as a party official: "Comrades, we will be worse off." I will not be able to say anything else because instructions to hand over all food to the center and to other republics, as was the case in previous years, while receiving virtually nothing in return, will not be fulfilled. The time for exhortations and CPSU diktat is over. People are ceasing to trust us.

As for Union programs. Comrades, you have spoken and raised questions here. I am pained and my heart bleeds at the realization that the Union programs will not be fulfilled and that the attitude toward them is worse than it was in the past toward culture.

I expected you, Mikhail Sergeyevich, to finally provide a clear-cut answer to the following question: What kind of society will we build, what kind of state will we have? What kind of economic relations will there be and what kind of political structure will take shape after this? I tried to receive answers to these questions at Central Committee plenums when I asked: When will we finally call a halt to reforms? We have begun perestroyka and we are only smashing things up like a household building and repair trust which leaves a home without a roof and without windows, yet does nothing.

Now we have the latest—I do not know how many there have been since the start of perestroyka—reform of the political system. I see it more as a British-U.S.-Franco-Japanese hybrid Russian-style. That is why I said the following at the Central Committee plenum: Yes, I agree, even if an emperor or a tsar would be better, at least may I understand that we not only have an esteemed president but also esteemed presidential power. I see now that this power will not come about.

I would like an answer to the following question: What kind of economic relations will there be in our country between people and between republics? Many people here have spoken out against 70 years of leveling and are proposing to suddenly distribute all property equally. Then, they say, there will be no problems. Many people's "jaws have dropped" at this miraculous, simple economic decision. Why be sly, comrades? Give people

truthful information rather than "OGONEK's" information and people will realize which party intends to defend whose interests and against whom. If you divide up general state and production stocks equally between USSR citizens, a family with 13 children will receive a share several times larger than a family with one child. I do not think that the Baltic people's fronts will back Comrade Shatalin either if he acts from these positions.

But, suppose, we carry out destatization, privatization, and distribute everything. Then young people will come into production and there will be nothing left for their share.

Further. Even five-percent dividends from shares, as in a savings bank, will promise their shareholders an income of 100 billion rubles [R] a year. You remember that the state budget deficit totals R60 billion. I wonder who will pay?. The state will not be able. There is a way out: New shares can be issued to those people who do not live from one wage packet to the next. Two or three operations of this kind, and the question of owners in the Soviet Union—pardon me, what was the Soviet Union—will be decided.

Is that not why democratic and social democratic parties consider their social base to be entrepreneurs, cooperative workers, "shadow economy operators," and, regrettably, the rich section of the Soviet intelligentsia and young people who are frankly being deceived.

Lastly. As with many other perestroyka slogans, there is a hitch inherent in the slogan "to each according to his labor"—it will be a case of to each according to his initial capital. That is why, Nikolay Ilich, many communist deputies are, perhaps, averse to the president's program but are trying to back him as general secretary. On the other hand, I am delighted that the leaders of the new parties are attentively perusing reports about CPSU conferences and congresses and are taking on board the proposals made there on how to escape from the crisis. For two years communists have been talking about monetary reform, raising retail prices to the level of average European prices—with a corresponding increase in the population's monetary income at the same time—about customs duties, and about speeding up the adoption of laws on law-enforcement bodies in order to ensure that the force of the laws prevails over the laws of force. Communists' proposals have certainly not always been adopted by the general secretary—more correctly, by his Presidential Council. So, let Democrats, Constitutional Democrats, and Liberals ponder together what has to be done and how, rather than how to deal one another a more painful blow.

Let us learn our treatment of history from Klyuchevskiy and Solovyev and the methodology of analysis from the classical scholars. If you do not like Marx and Lenin, study Adam Smith and Galbraith, according to whom the progress of production is inconceivable without reinforcing the administrative-edict system and distribution is inconceivable without the market. But when you speak of the CPSU's 70-year rule, which has resulted in starvation, remember 1987-1988 when many goods were sold on credit, rugs and fur coats were eaten by moths, and the day that N.I. Travkin was awarded the Hero's stars for increasing labor productivity, I do not think that there was only black bread and egg plant puree on the table....

But where I agree with Deputy Travkin is with regard to the logic of his view of the process of forming a new Union. In order to decide whether to join the Union or community, you have to know what kind of states will be in the Union, what kind of constitution it will have, and what kind of powers. On the other hand, the new Union's constitution can only be adopted by its members. If we intend to "put" 101 autonomous states on the world political map and have 101 seats in the United Nations, the world will not accept us, they will not accept 101 armies, 101 militias, and 101 presidents. We must not confuse the desires of the peoples with the ambitions of their leaders.

I do not have the right to speak on behalf of the Belorussian people, especially since there are people in our republic who want to create their own Greater Lithuanian Principality from the Baltic to the Black Sea. But I convey the pain felt by thousands of residents of Grodno Oblast who remember that all the political disputes that Sweden, Germany, and Poland have had with Russia have for many centuries begun and ended with a conflagration on Belorussian territory, which you cannot hide behind the Urals.

Our people made a choice in 1939—they joined with Russia and Belorussia and the other republics in an alliance of equals. We are in favor of the Union. [passage omitted]

PRAVDA Version of Nishanov Report on Treaty

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[Report by Rafik Nishanovich Nishanov, chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities of the USSR Supreme Soviet, delivered at the 19 December session of the Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies in the Kremlin in Moscow: "On the General Concept of the New Union Treaty and the Procedure for Concluding It." The Moscow Television Service version was published in the 20 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 28, column two, under the headline "Nishanov Speaks on Union Treaty Concept"]

[Text] Esteemed peoples' deputies, esteemed president of the USSR! The Fourth Congress of USSR Peoples' Deputies should have its considerable say on the most important question of the historic future of the country's peoples—on the question of insuring the real sovereignty of the republics, and the preservation, renewal, and strengthening of our union. Today we are facing perhaps the most critical moment in our social, economic, public, political, and cultural development.

Burning and acute problems have descended on us like an avalanche. All of them are extremely topical and are at the center of public attention. They are strongly affecting the interests of our people. However, among all these problems, one merits special attention and has assumed extremely important and principal significance. This is the problem of intercommunication, friendship, and cooperation between the people of our country. without mutual understanding, mutual support, concord, and good relations between the peoples, successful progress along the path of transformations in the economic, social, ecological, moral, and other spheres of life and activities of our society and state will not be possible. It could all remain nothing more than wishful thinking and, in reality, we will be facing even more unpredictable situations and their possible consequences. The majority of not just ours but the world public does not see any other way out of the present situation apart from preserving the Union-like relations between the peoples of our country.

Of course, it is not a matter of preserving interethnic relation in their old form and within the framework of a centrist organization, but of a fundamental, radical transformation of the Union and of creating a fundamentally new Union treaty. This must be a union of sovereign republics, in other words a union of independent states which, by the will of their peoples, freely manage their own affairs and establish internal and international mutual relations. A union which not only does not encroach upon and does not restrict the sovereignty of the republics, but, on the contrary, supports it and guarantees it. A union in which broad, voluntary, and economically effective interaction between the peoples is insured, and one in which each individual feels himself to be a citizen of the homeland enjoying full, rights.

The question arises as to whether it is possible, after all that had happened to us in our history, and after so many injustices and grievances, to preserve Union relations and to transform the Union and to breathe new life into it. The question is not a rhetorical one but a fateful one which determines the future, not only of our peoples, but of the whole planet. For it is not by chance that the world has become extremely anxious by all that has happened in our country. Dear comrades, let us consider this question in a serious, thorough, and responsible manner. Let us cast aside all ambitions, subjectivist approaches, and moods and think about the profound and fundamental interests of the peoples.

Today, one can state the following objective—I stress, dear comrades—objective grounds for comprehending the past, evaluating the present, and forecasting the future. First, the post-October as well as the pre-October periods of our history were not periods of nothing but oppression, violence, destruction, and repression. In my view, everything was much more complex. Ugly centrist phenomena co-existed with the constructive and creative labor of millions of people. Otherwise, we would not be able today to register so many peoples with developed culture, preserved individuality, and high national self-consciousness on the country's map. It will be apparently justifiable to differentiate between the policy of autocracy or that of an authoritarian-bureaucatic center and the real mutual relations of our peoples, although here too not everything has always been terribly decent. We are all united by a common historical destiny from which nobody can escape. And if we have suffered so much sorrow together, it seems worth it to advance along the path of freedom, reform, and the creation of a new life together, too.

Second, as a result of centuries-long interaction between peoples, a complex territorial pattern of people's settlement has emerged in our country, and a profound interethnic displacement has taken place. Suffice it to say that according to verified data over 60 million people—that is almost a quarter of the country's population—live beyond their national-state formations or do not have them. There are tens of millions of mixed marriages in the country, a practice which has been going on for generations, thereby involving representatives of the most diverse peoples in different family circles and lines. In other words, we have internationalism not only in the same stairwell or labor collective but increasingly in our veins. I think that the feature of unity and peoples' interdependence should never recede from our field of vision when we discuss and solve the problems of allied relations.

For if you pose the question of the collapse of the union, then who and how will sever the blood and spiritual ties of the people, and what could then be created out of this?

Third, during the years of joint activity between the peoples of the country, a certain infrastructure of social production has been formed with its own distribution of productive forces, their specialization and cooperation, means of communication and information, and scientific-technical servicing. This is the immense wealth of all our peoples, enabling by prudent utilization many socioeconomic and cultural problems to be successfully tackled. Of course, social production must be taken away from authoritarian-bureaucratic command and the improvident inefficiency of officialdom and be turned over to truly public property, and into the authority of

assiduous and responsible citizen-owners of our fatherland. But to destroy the national-economic complex and turn it into regionally enclosed, localized subsystems is hardly economically justified and socially effective. Surely the experience of recent times is testimony to this. The first steps toward economic separateness had only just been taken when economic disorder and in its wake the complete collapse of the consumer market broke out throughout the country.

At the present time it is already possible to speak about a fourth reason which by its very nature is subjective but by its activities has acquired objectivity. Whatever our attitudes toward perestroyka, it is thanks to perestroyka that the old structures have been broken down, which for decades held our society in the state with which we are all familiar. That center which once commanded the peoples and put some kind of all-purpose bridle on them no longer exists.

Moreover, the sociopolitical situation in the country has drastically changed. The alignment of political forces has become different. Quite a number of organizations and movements have sprung up which not only criticize the deformations of socialism and propose constructive and, I would say, attractive programs; forces have also amerged which do not accept socialism in any guise, even as a humane and democratic one. They have raised the issue of restoring capitalism, and not in its modern socialized form, which is in evidence in developed social-democratic countries, but in its crude form of the initial accumulation of capital. Therefore, we have many objective grounds which, in combination with people's will, make it possible to assert that there are sufficient premises for preserving and radically changing our union. Esteemed comrades, the general concept of a new Union treaty that has been submitted for your examination, and set forth in the draft which has been proposed for nationwide discussion by the USSR president after long consultations, is an attempt, on the one hand, to comprehend and use the aforementioned objective grounds, and on the other hand, to create conditions capable of normalizing interethnic relations and to open a vista for a free and democratic development of all the peoples of our country. One should note immediately that the considerations and provisions submitted for your examination are not a result of some research conducted in isolation, as certain comrades maintain. For a long time a vast circle of politicians, scientists, and publicists in all republics and parts of the country has been drawn into the creative process of comprehending and studying the problems of renewing allied relations. One can say directly that almost anyone who is interested in renewing the Union has an opportunity to voice his opinion and make his contribution to this most important cause.

In drafting the concept for a new Union treaty, the following were employed: seven draft union treaties independently drawn up by Belorussia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Kirghizia, Turkmenia, and Tajikistan; two drafts prepared by the Institute of the State and Law of the USSR Academy of Sciences; three drafts awarded prizes by an Interregional Deputies' Group panel of adjudicators; and one draft prepared by representatives of a group of political parties. In the framework of consultations for the Union treaty, substantive meetings took place with representatives of all republics and autonomous entities, as well as 25 new political parties and movements. Representatives of peoples which had been deprived of their statehood by forcible and unconstitutional methods also expressed support for the draft Union treaty.

Much significance in substantiating the substance and forms for transforming the Union was naturally attached to the declarations on state sovereignty which had already been adopted in the majority of Union and autonomous republics. The provisions contained in these declarations essentially provided the basic principles of the innovations which have been incorporated in the draft of the new Union treaty, and which are reflected in all its sections. Overall, more than 60 documents drafted in the republics were used.

As one knows, the problems of renovating the Union and drawing up the concept for a new Union treaty were discussed three times at sessions of the USSR Soviet of the Federation and twice in the USSR Supreme Soviet. On 25 September, a report was heard on the progress of consultations on preparing a new treaty, and on 3 December, the overall concept of the treaty and the procedure for concluding it. The overall concept and draft were sent by the USSR president to all Union and autonomous republics and autonomous oblasts and okrugs. On 24 November of this year the draft of the new Union treaty was submitted for nationwide discussion.

One cannot fail to recognize the substantial contribution made toward understanding the problems of a renewal of the Union by the mass media. Many highly constructive ideas have been received through them. Consequently it may be confirmed without stretching any points and without any exaggeration that the concept of a new Union treaty that is now emerging is the outcome of lengthy efforts by representatives of virtually all the country's peoples. At the same time, of course, it is a preliminary document which is subject to further coordination and deepening by the plenipotentiary delegations of all republics.

I should like, dear comrades, to draw your attention to the following key points in the draft for a new Union treaty, which distinguishes it from the 1922 Treaty on the formation of the USSR, and from other documents regulating interrelationships within the framework of a federation or a community. Three interrelated principles characterize the basis of the Union. First, the equality of all people, irrespective of their nationality and place of residence; moreover, it is an equality that accords with

the United Nations' universal declaration, international pacts, and all-European documents, including the Paris Charter. Thereby the new Union and everything connected with it is assuming a humanitarian dimension and serves as a method for the implementation and a guarantee of the free self-realization of the individual.

I think that this is particularly topical in the present situation, when in some places people have started to treat individuals' rights and liberties too freely and to interpret them and bend them to their own liking. Second, there is the principle of the equality of all peoples, irrespective of their size and level of development. In the final analysis we are obliged to attain a position whereby each people may determine for itself, independently conduct its own affairs, and also run its own life. The point here is not what specific form of organizational consolidation a people will choose, but indeed that all forms be equal from the viewpoint of reality and life, and that they insure the development of each people. Third, there is the principle of interdependence between the rights and liberties of peoples and ethnic communities, and the rights and liberties of the individual, for a people cannot be free if albeit a single individual is being oppressed within its framework or in its name, and an individual cannot feel free if he knows that his fellows somewhere are not experiencing this freedom. It is inadmissible that the interests of people be infringed for the sake of the triumph of some national idea, and even more so that people become innocent victims.

Certain equality in rights should be achieved here. The first section of the draft Union treaty states that seven fundamental premises of a new Union is a practical reflection of these principles. Here it is proved unequivocally that every republic which is party to the treaty is a sovereign state and has the total state power on its territory. That is why the unification of sovereign states into a union is being considered not as a limitation or restriction of their sovereignty, as some people perceive it, but only as a form of implementing such a sovereignty, and a form in which the will of relevant peoples is freely expressed.

At the same time the concept of a new Union treaty suggests that the reformed union will not present itself as some amorphous, faceless, and helpless formation in which everyone is free to do whatever one likes without taking into consideration the interests of others. The idea is that a new Union would also appear as a sovereign federative state incorporating the sovereignty of the republics and attaching to it a new Union quality.

At present on this occasion, there are differences in the interpretation of two aspects, comrades. Some people believe that two sovereignties are incompatible. If republics are sovereign, then the Union cannot be sovereign. Conversely, if the Union is sovereign then republics lose their sovereignty. Discussions that are normally held are due to different interpretation of the idea of sovereignty and due to attaching to it some sort of bewitching content.

In the meantime, sovereignty reflects the condition of the peoples' will which is expressed, in one aspect, in state sovereignty through its state organization, and in the other aspect in its national sovereignty through its ethnic organization. That is why the sovereignty of republics, one thinks, cannot be considered as anything other than as an indication or an attribute of their statehood, which testifies to the fact that the peoples of the republics united in a state are independantly organizing their lives and getting on with life, and that their will is supreme when decisions are made.

The issue of recognizing the declarations of a republics' state sovereignty was raised at the Congress. But surely sovereignty cannot be confirmed or approved by anyone. After all, the people's will, which does not depend on anyone, is the source of state sovereignty. It is different when there are doubts in trustworthiness of this or that will. In these cases a referendum should be held. In that way the harmonized correlation of the people's state will at various levels of their mutual ties not encroach upon anyone and will only be evidence of the sensible approach made toward tackling issues dealing with the organization of statehood.

Others believe that sovereign states cannot be united in a federal state. The argument whether we should be a federation, a confederation, or a community continues. But the whole point is that, on entering the Union, sovereign states choose the form of their union relations for themselves. Our peoples, or at least the majority of them, think that a federative state could form the pattern for the renewal of Union relations among the people. It is most adequately reflecting the historically evolved solidity and contents of mutual connections between all the people throughout country. The present contents, if I were to follow the text of the draft Union treaty, lay in the fact that all the people of the country, and the republics which unite them, aim at forming a free and economically developed civil society, at strengthening and developing democracy, at preserving and developing national traditions, at the reinforcement of peace, and in insuring cooperation and solidarity among nations in tackling global issues.

It is a community of this kind which underlies the expediency of unification precisely in the form of a sovereign federative state, although I do not deny that it is worth pondering again and again upon the form of unification.

In this connection, for an understanding of the new model of the Union at which the draft Union treaty is aimed, great significance attaches to the ideas and points

incorporated in the section entitled "Structure of the Union." The new, democratic substance of the Union is clearly visible here.

Now one can hear a good deal of reproaches and criticism aimed at the Union's plenary powers which allegedly infringe upon the sovereignty of republics and hamper them in managing their own affairs.

Yes, comrades, if one looks into the past, all this is true, indeed. Yes, serious distortions of our principles were committed in the past. This includes the protracted absence of a law-governed state, the problems that were unsolved for decades, the violation of the basic principles of national policy, the imposition of uniformity, the criminal acts of evicting whole peoples from their historical homeland, the diktat and omnipotence of the center, a command-based economy, and so on and so forth.

Finally, this includes a totally deformed federation which has turned into a typical unitary state. Taken together, all this could not fail to affect people's trust and, let us put it bluntly, it has undermined this trust. Let us look soberly at the situation. Even for all the correctness of the strategy and the scrupulous calibration of practical measures, the center has extraordinary difficulties in earning trust. Moreover, incalculable distortions and deformations have provoked a sharp response from localities, and in some cases it has received strong irrational impulses. You know that not only correct actions but also a long period of time are required for removing irrationality.

In the draft that has been submitted, serious barriers have been set in the way of the possible willfulness of the center. The Union's plenary powers have been significantly narrowed down even with regard to the USSR law on delimiting plenary powers between the USSR and subjects of the federation.

It is enough to try and grasp the meaning of Article 5 of the draft Union treaty to have no difficulty in satisfying oneself of the fact that it deals with issues which are of common interest to all republics and to all peoples of our country.

Well, the protection of Union sovereignty and territorial integrity, the determination and the guarding of the USSR state border, insuring USSR state security, the organization of its defense, the leadership of the USSR Armed Forces, the declaration of war and the conclusion of peace—are these really not a matter for everyone, and do they not affect the interests and destinies of each of the peoples? Or foreign policy, defining the strategy of economic development, managing common, basic production systems—do these areas really not make up a joint basis for any people's vital activity?

After all, the world understands that there are phenomena which are universal, which are necessary to everyone to an equal extent, and which have been integrated for that reason. This also applies to the issues of establishing the foundations of social policy, of coordination and cooperation in the sphere of culture, education, basic research, scientific and technical progress, maintaining public order, and combating crime. Who will say that such matters do not exercise people, and that alarm and pain caused by them does not unite all of us in one union?

It is also significant that each republic, by dint of concluding an agreement with the USSR, can additionally hand over to it the exercising of its powers, and the Union in turn, with the consent of all republics, can hand over to one or a few of them the exercising of individual powers on their territories. Enshrined in the draft in this way is a flexible and democratic formula of determining matters of joint management, and powers which are necessary for their practical implementation.

For the first time in a draft Union treaty, problems of constituting the Union are resolved. What is meant is membership of the Union, which is purely voluntary, and a free expression of the people's will; citizenship which equalizes the rights and obligations of all people within the framework of the Union; the territory which is guaranteed by the Union for all peoples; relations between the republics where the sovereignty of each of them is insured as regards property, taxes, duties, and with the appropriate parties, the precise demarcation of their rights and their obligations.

I should particularly like to highlight questions of a state and legal character. It is recognized that a republic participates in the exercise of the USSR's powers by means of the joint formation of Union bodies, the creation of other mechanisms and procedures, and the harmonization of interests and actions. It has been established that republican legislation has primacy in the republic's territory in all matters, with the sole exception of those that have been transferred to the competence of the Union. Legal protection of the republics' sovereign rights is provided for (Article 9). Thereby we are moving away from the center, that was previously actually opposed to the republics, and we are creating a true Union of equal republics enjoying full rights, in which each of them can live independently and, jointly with others, conduct common business in a sovereign manner. I think that such a major step, the transformation of Union relationships, will be supported by all Soviet people.

The section entitled "The Structure of the Union" is organically linked with the section called "Organs of Power and Administration", in which a major step is taken along the road of the structural democratization of

the union. The principle of the representation of the republics in the whole diversity of Union bodies of power and administration has been adopted as a basis. This applies primarily to the USSR Supreme Soviet, where it is assumed that the Soviet of Nationalities will be formed from the delegations of the supreme representative organs of power of the republics and the organs of power of the national-territorial formations in accordance with agreed norms. Also guaranteed is the representation of all peoples living in the USSR in the Soviet of Nationalities.

Incidentally, the question of the status, structure, and procedure for the formation of the USSR Supreme Soviet attracted particular attention from the committees and commissions of the USSR Supreme Soviet, from many groups of people's deputies and from a number of Supreme Soviets in the republics. The view was expressed, for instance, that the Soviet of Nationalities must be formed according to the established quotas, but through universal, equal, and direct elections in the constituencies. Otherwise the interests of the respective peoples will be infringed.

There is a proposal to the effect that the Supreme Soviet of the Union should be made unicameral, with equal representation in it of the participants in the Union Treaty.

Let us reflect on these matters together comrades, and seek the best solutions to them. The president of the Union is established as the head of the Union state, with supreme administrative and executive power. The Soviet of the Federation becomes a body for determining the main directions of the Union's domestic and external policies and for coordinating the actions of the republics. It is provided with wide independent powers. A provision is being brought in under which collegiums are set up at the Union ministries and departments, made up of the heads of the relevant ministries and departments of the republics according to their duties. Given that sorting out legislation, strengthening legality, and fighting crime have become very acute problems at this time, an important place in the draft Union treaty is given to the establishment of institutions for law enforcement and for the implementation of Union laws. It is proposed to set up a USSR Constitutional Court, a USSR Supreme Court, a USSR Economic Court, courts in the Armed Forces, and an all-Union procuracy, in whose activities the full involvement of the heads of the relevant republican bodies is also envisioned. Thus, we already have on hand the draft of a new Union treaty and a large number of interesting refinements which represent, in aggregate, an overall concept for the renovation of the USSR. Naturally, not all matters have been thought through properly, and proper answers have not been found to all questions. The discussion of the draft at sessions of the USSR Supreme Soviet and its committees and commissions and deputies' groups, as well as many articles in the press, and radio and tv broadcasts, show that while there is approval on the whole, there are also substantial critical comments and quite justified supplementary points being put forward. On a number of points a wide spread of opinions is apparent. In a word, all of us have quite enough to do. I would like to point to a number of difficult areas around which, if one is to be frank, passions are running high.

Primarily there is the issue of the subjects of a federation, or to be more precise, the parties of a new Union Treaty. In light of the history of the establishment of the USSR and the existing Constitution, many comrades believe that the republics which are called Union republics should be the subjects of the new Union. But it is a well known fact that the distinct superiority enjoyed by the Union republics has for a long time now failed to satisfy the autonomous republics. The majority of them have now proclaimed their sovereignty, some of them as part of the Union republics, and others outside them, as it were.

There is an evident desire on the part of the republics to equalize their state and legal status. The autonomous oblasts and autonomous okrugs which are also striving to acquire the state of republics have now joined in this process.

One cannot help but give thought also to the fact that a number of peoples in the country do not have a clearly expressed organizational consolidation. But they also wish to take part in the activity of the Union equally with others. Evidently, it is necessary to treat the will of each people with respect and to seek some way of taking account of this will.

There are mixed opinions about the question of the will of representatives of the so-called non-native peoples who make up a large proportion in a number of places. How is one to take account of and assess the expression of the will of peoples in such cases? For example, what method is suitable to determine the expression of the peoples' will on the subject of the Union treaty. Now, representative bodies of state power in certain republics, whose members were elected with the support of 30 to 40 percent of the electorate, suppose that it is precisely they who express the will of the people and act in its name. And what about the rest, dear comrades? The rest who make up half or even more than half of the population of the given republic? We have no experience of referendums. However, it is worth using this form of direct expression of the peoples' will in deciding such an important question. In this connection, the proposal made by the USSR president to hold a referendum throughout the country on the subject of transforming our Union into a union of sovereign states on a federal basis deserves support.

Now, a few words about the procedure for concluding a

Union treaty. Various points of view have already been expressed about this, both in the USSR Supreme Soviet and in the Supreme Soviets of the republics.

What these amount to is this: that the preparation and conclusion of a Union treaty is a matter for all subjects of the federation. It would be desirable to work out a special procedure: it might, perhaps, be expedient for the procedure to be based upon existing practice in international law. For example, authorized representatives of the republics should coordinate their positions and prepare and initial the text of the draft of the new Union treaty. Then that draft could be discussed at sittings of the Supreme Soviets of the republics, and, after approval, special delegations could be assigned there for the signing. After that the Union treaty could enter into legal force in accordance with an agreed procedure. Other options are possible.

Esteemed Comrades!

Overall, the process of the preparation and signing of the Union treaty will probably take a certain amount of time and will require further joint coordinated efforts by all interested parties. We are going along the road of constructive, specific actions.

Against this background, dear comrades, the assertions of USSR people's deputies who have spoken here—Comrade Ruutel, Arnold Fedorovich, the Comrade Bisher, Ilmar Olgertovich—that someone is forcing Estonia and Latvia to sign a Union treaty appear to be completely groundless. Even more striking is the point in the appeal to the Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies by the Supreme Soviets of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, adopted in Vilnius on 1 December, which says that we categorically object to attempts to compel the Baltic states to sign the Union treaty by means of economic pressure and the threat of the use of military force. Let me ask you, comrades—what sort of economic coercion are we talking about? And what sort of military threat are we talking about? These assertions are not backed up by anything and are aimed, I think, at exerting unprecedented pressure upon the peoples of these republics. The truth is that delegations of Baltic republics were invited on equal terms with the others to hold consultations, which they rejected. But, on the other hand, a number of political parties, public organizations, associations of labor collectives, and a large number of citizens of these republics made direct appeals to the preparatory committee to participate in the consultations, which did take place. It would be wrong to say unequivocally that these republics, as a whole, refuse to participate in the preparation of the Union treaty. If we were to do this, it would mean ignoring the legitimate rights of those millions of citizens who hold an opinion on this issue. We once again invite all the republics to participate in the treaty process.

I would like to stress that the center is not giving anything away for free to the republics, nor is the reverse true. No one is standing there with hands outstretched, begging for something—neither the center nor the republics. The point is to agree upon the vitally important interests of peoples, upon an equitable basis and to universal benefit. In order to clear away the obstacles and to ensure the process whereby the treaty is prepared and signed, we have to overcome tremendous difficulties.

One of the difficult problems is the problem of Nagorno-Karabakh and the relations resulting from this problem between two fraternal republics. The numerous efforts in this direction made by union bodies have not yet produced positive results, but the work is continuing and a resolution of the issue can only be found by constitutional means. We therefore welcome the contacts that have started recently between the leaders and legislators of the two fraternal republics with the aim of normalizing the situation.

The situation in the Moldovan Socialist Soviet Republic remains no less complex. The one-sided actions by the legislature of Moldova in the initial stage led to a crisis situation, in which the Gagauz and Dnestr republics came into being. It is well known that the Union bodies took a negative attitude toward that kind of development of events from both sides. Here we have a precise position. The Union is the guarantor of the preservation of the sovereignty and integrity of the Republic of Moldova while maintaining complete respect for the rights and the dignity of all the peoples that inhabit this republic.

Difficult processes are also taking place in Georgia. In its appeal to the Supreme Soviet of Georgia and the oblast soviet of the South Ossetian Oblast, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet called upon them to cancel all the anti-constitutional decisions that have been adopted and return to the status quo. Under conditions where Georgia's legislature has declared that it will not be party to the Union Treaty, the Supreme Soviet of the Abkhaz Republic and the Soviet of People's Deputies of the South Ossetian Autonomous Oblast have stated their desire to participate in the preparation of the Union treaty. What solution can be found here? Once again a solution can only be found upon a constitutional basis, taking into consideration the interests of all strata of the population living in this republic. We cannot ignore anyone's rights.

The question of restoring the rights of peoples deprived of their statehood or their native territories by forcible and unconstitutional means remains no less tense. Political rehabilitation has been carried out by the USSR Supreme Soviet.

Recently, an immense amount of work has been carried out to verify all the acts on the basis of which all these illegal actions were perpetrated. All decisions of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, the State Defense Committee, the Council of Ministers, and other bodies have been systematized and generalized. The process of declassifying these documents is under way. Upon its completion a special act will be adopted on their complete abolition. This will be the next step toward a full restoration of the rights of these people.

The Soviet of Nationalities of the USSR Supreme Soviet has set up a number of commissions dealing with the problems of Soviet Germans, Crimean Tatars, Meskhatian Turks, Greeks, Kurds, Ingushis, and other peoples. In order to tackle the practical issues, a number of commissions was set up in the Union Council of Ministers. These commissions work in most complex conditions, but despite all difficulties their work is useful.

The commissions of the Soviet of Nationalities are now rendering serious help in removing tension in certain parts of the borders between Tajikitan and Kirghizia. They are also monitoring the consequences of the causes of the events in Osh. I have drawn your attention to these points to show you that specific everyday work on the normalization of interethnic relations and the resolution of conflict situations is also an organic part of the process of the Union's renewal and of the preparation of a new Union treaty. Comrades! The question submitted for discussion at the present congress is a fateful question for every people and for every resident of our country. It has historic significance, and we should We must do everything possible to see that present and future generations of the Soviet people will not be ashamed of the decision we adopt on this issue.

Radio Coverage of 19 Dec Session

WA0501121990

For Moscow Domestic Service recorded coverage of the 19 December session of the Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies, see the 20 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 35, column two.

For the speech by Vitold Fokin, Ukrainian Council of Ministers president, see the 21 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 26, column one.

For the speech by Deputy Aleksandr Obolenskiy see the 21 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 27, column one.

For the speech by Deputy Arnold Klautsen of Latvia see the 21 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 29, column one

20 December

Speeches From 20 December Sessions Reported

PM2312173990 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Dec 90 Union Edition pp 2-10

[Continuation of the "Stenographic Record of Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies," this section covers the final stages of the 19 December afternoon session through end of the 20 December session]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted]

Seventh Sitting

Kremlin Palace of Congresses, 1000 hours, 20 December 1990. [passage omitted]

V.F. Romanov, *rector of Magnitogorsk State Pedagogical Institute (Magnitogorskiy Territorial Electoral District, Chelyabinsk Oblast):* Dear comrades! When discussing the Union treaty, I think that we need a clear stance on those republics that have made ready to leave the USSR. We must call a spade a spade today. I personally see the crux of this stance as follows.

First, we do not need to hang on to anyone by the scruff of the neck today: Love cannot be forced. You will not hang on to anyone by force, if that is the will of the people rather than political intriguers.

Second, I think that secession from the USSR, the old motherland, should be effected in a human, fine, respectable manner without slamming the door and without blackmail and ultimatums. Our grandfathers' advice is good in this respect: Do not spit in the well from which you may be compelled to drink several times. I am talking about the stance held by individual leaders in the Baltic. I think that the provocative actions of some leaders are quite unacceptable.

Deputy Ruutel took the microphone quite recently and said. "We will not join the drafting commission." Why was this demonstration necessary? This is all a matter of superficial political games. I think that we need culture in relations, culture in diplomatic contacts between powers. We must proceed on the basis of the fact that the Soviet Union, despite all the current problems and complexities, will always be a great power, so, all states should treat this power in the appropriate manner.

Third, a referendum is the requisite initial condition for secession from the Union. That is the elementary norm that should be observed by any decent person. That is

why I think that it is totally antidemocratic, cowardly, and unscrupulous to "suppress" a referendum, if you will. The leaders of the Baltic republics are saying today that they did not join the USSR and do not therefore need to vote to leave the USSR. Comrades, it is a fact that they have lived within our family for almost 50 years, so they can ask the people to agree to this. They may be right in terms of form but in essence this position is a mockery.

Now to move on. If a particular republic stays within the Soviet Union, it is quite obvious that no borders should be reviewed, we have agreed on this. But if a particular republic leaves the USSR, this republic should know that, as an autonomous state, it must square territoiral accounts with the Soviet Union and the other republics. Those people who have prepared to leave should harbor no illusions on this score. The Baltic republics are counting on being able to reach agreement with Yeltsin on a separatist basis. But, comrades, Yeltsin is not Russia and nor is the Russian Supreme Soviet Russia. Russia is the millions of inhabitants of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic], Russia is the tens of millions of people who live outside the RSFSR, and, lastly, Russia is the 1,000-strong body of Russia's deputies elected to the rank of USSR people's deputies.

"Separatists" today are increasingly bold when they live under the roof of a powerful foreign political guarantor, when they have an unlimited market in which to sell their produce and reliable sources of raw materials, and when they are insured against the severing of economic ties. But, comrades, you must also consider the fact that in conditions of military confrontation a particular republic may be the victim of real occupiers if it leaves the USSR. Thus, imaginary independence may become real dependence on the strong men of this world, on adjacent great powers, and this fact must be considered.

Voices can be heard today saying that there will be no more war. I envy Deputy Travkin who is very free with his advice and who knows everything under the sun. He even knows that there will be no war. Comrades, God alone knows what will happen tomorrow. It is at the least a rosy fairy tale for kids to give 100-percent guarantees when a quite different alignment of political forces may occur tomorrow.

I am not saying that there will necessarily be war, but it is also unreasonable to give guarantees that there will not be a war. Comrades, before discussing the conceptual, substantive side of the Union treaty, we must obviously answer an outwardly simple question: Why do we need a new Union treaty, what in practice can it give ordinary workers? I would answer this question in the following way: Relatively speaking, it should resolve three historical tasks. I am somewhat shifting the accent here in comparison to Comrade Nishanov's wording.

First, I see the purpose and essence of the Union treaty as being to create conditions for the free development of every national-ethnic group—not only republics. As Deputy Bykov said, the purpose of a new Union treaty is for it to be founded on priority of human rights. If we present ourselves as humanists and democrats, it is quite obvious that human rights should be paramount for us. What is more, I consider that the condition of sovereignty [suverennost] is not the end in itself but a means to most fully implement human rights, potential, and capabilities. If sovereignty is not on the side of the rights of the specific individual, who needs that kind of sovereignty?

Second, the Union treaty is necessary to really decentralize the whole system of administration and rid it of the petty external regulations imposed by the union center. Not only republics and national-autonomous formations, but regions, too, must be given the maximum autonomy.

No good cause should be reduced to the absurd situation whereby it becomes its own antithesis. The euphoria of sovereignty has given rise to a wave of local-national and regional egoism capable of smashing to pieces the economic and political integrity of not only the USSR but also the republics, including Russia. Moderation in all things is what is needed.

Third, we need a new Union treaty to provide legislative incentives for socioeconomic integration and the internationalization of the people's spiritual life. We have turned interethnic relations into a one-way street, filling them with discussions of self-determination, sovereignty, and national freedom alone. The concept of internationalism that reflects the working people's natural craving for normal human contacts has totally disappeared from our vocabulary. I represent working-class Magnitka. This is a large working-class settlement, it constitutes a "black hole" from any viewpoint. But interethnic Magnitka, where a the proportion of the Tatar-Bashkir population is considerable, has not known the problems of interethnic hostility. For God's sake do not let the evil eye fall on us, since working Magnitogorsk does not spend time attend rallies, but works instead. I am absolutely convinced that interethnic conflicts are not provoked by ordinary people,by workers. They are provoked from above, they are provoked by leaders of various movements.

Another factor. I think that the Union treaty should enshrine a unity of approaches to the concept of "sovereignty." Today there is "double-entry bookkeeping" in assessing the concepts of "sovereignty" and "right to self-determination." If it is a question of relations between the center and the republics, our Georgian and Moldovan comrades and the Baltic representatives say that they are in favor of state independence, integrity, and inviolability of borders. But when the discussion

turns to the right to self-determination for the Abkhazians, the South Ossetians, the Gagauz, and the Russian- and Polish-speaking population [of the Baltics], these representatives fight most fervently against separatism. This kind of "double-entry bookkeeping" does not work for the good of the cause. The Union treaty must enshrine this fact.

The most flagrant anomaly today is the confrontation between Union and republic centers. It is reaching the absurd point where voices are heard from the Russian legislative rostrum saying that we are allegedly depriving Union structures of accreditation in Moscow. Comrades, we must remember that Moscow is above all the capital of the Soviet Union. The concept of the RSFSR and Russia are not identical territorially or ethnically because millions of Russian live outside Russia. There have been Russian lands on the territory of other republics since time immemorial. The RSFSR is the core of the real Soviet Union. Russia cannot leave or enter the Soviet Union. It is the backbone of the Soviet Union.

Chairman: Deputy Makhkamov is given the floor. Deputy Angapov should prepare himself. Esteemed People's Deputies, I ask you to adhere strictly to the Standing Orders.

K. Makhkamov, *president of the Tajik SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] (Dushanbinskiy Territorial Electoral District, Tajik SSR):* Esteemed people's deputies, esteemed comrade president of the USSR! The draft Union treaty has gripped the attention of literally all strata of the republic's population. Very many proposals and comments, sometimes mutually exclusive, have been put forward. The vast majority, however, have come out in favor of the speediest conclusion of the treaty. We are firmly convinced that the way out of the crisis, prospects of development, and a new political and economic revival, in the context of our proclamation of sovereignty, are possible only within a united, reconstituted Union of Sovereign Soviet Republics. The discussion of the draft Union treaty at the session of the republic Supreme Soviet that ended the other day showed that the draft treaty could be adopted as a basis. But many provisions of the draft demand further work, and in some cases substantial revision.

The draft treaty does not provide for a mechanism to ensure real equality of the republics, but only proclaims this premise, as was the case formerly. In this context we would consider it necessary to clearly formulate a provision on the manner in which the sovereign republics ensure their equality and participation in the resolution of all questions affecting their interests. We feel that one lever for realizing actual equality would be the radical reorganization of the USSR Supreme Soviet. In our opinion the future Supreme Soviet should be unicameral and should be made up of an equal number of deputies from each republic regardless of the size of territories or population numbers. Unless this path is followed, the provision in the draft Union treaty to the effect that the republics participate in the exercise of the Union's powers on an equal footing will remain only on paper. Why do we see things that way? Because in the past, too, the equality of the republics was proclaimed, but remained on paper.

The key issue, in our view, is the delegation of certain powers to the Union by the sovereign republics. In this context it is not infrequently proposed that the Union republics' powers also be enumerated in the Union treaty. I do not think we can agree to that, because any enumeration of the republics' powers in the Union treaty would amount to a limitation on their sovereignty. It is another matter when it comes to the powers of the Union or joint powers. Here we certainly need a clear delimitation of powers and an enumeration of those powers that are delegated by the republics and of the joint powers that are agreed on.

Another question of principle. At first sight it appears that the draft treaty provides for a stepping up of the Union republics' foreign political and foreign economic activity. In actual fact the republics' rights in these spheres are limited. We know the meaning of that inoffensive word "coordination." In practice it will mean that the republics will have to do everything that the Union prescribes. Therefore, in view of its statewide importance and the sovereign rights of the republics, foreign political and foreign economic activity should be classed as joint powers. Each sovereign republic differs from the next by virtue of many specific national, ethnic, historical, social, economic, natural, and climatic features which give a different character to the interaction between the Union and the republic and which, of course, cannot be reflected in the Union treaty. It should clearly be a question of the conclusion of multilateral and bilateral treaties with the Union. These treaties should take account of the republics' starting points, as well as objective peculiarities.

Another question. At the prompting of certain academic economists and journalists, a view that is, to put it mildly, fundamentally erroneous has grown up, namely the view that the Central Asian republics support the conclusion of the Union treaty because they are incapable of ensuring autonomous economic and social development, that these republics' budgets are subsidized. Yet subsidy is in fact a distorted form of redistribution of the surplus product created by us, to which we have a legitimate right. The main reason for our republic's sincere support for the Union treaty is that we are profoundly convinced that the new treaty accords with the vital interests of all republics and peoples. It is needed in order to ensure the new dynamics of the development of all the republics and the country as a whole. The new Union treaty largely determines the fate of all Soviet people, since it affects that most important

sphere of society's life—the structure of our multinational state. That is an important political aspect.

I do not think there is any need to demonstrate that the disintegration of the Union would lead to the formation of dozens of states and the emergence of new and in effect unpredictable problems, especially in the sphere of interethnic relations—territorial claims, and so forth. Situations are also arising in which traditional good-neighborly relations are broken to serve people's ambitions, thus flouting the vital interests of thousands of people. Unfortunately such cases are a cogent argument in favor of that prediction. We have no right to ignore or sweep aside the voices of alarm that warn us against the fatal severance of ties that have grown up between Soviet people of different nationalities in their years of shared life. To break these ties is to "cut the living tissue." Our legislators see the need to conclude the treaty as arising from the fact that only a new Union will make it possible to implement a policy that will protect the population, especially young people, the poorly off strata of society, pensioners, large families, and so forth during the difficult and perhaps even critical period of the transition to market relations.

I think any delay in signing the Union treaty plays into the hands of those who do not want to see the timely stabilization of the ultracomplex political and economic situation in the country, where both laws and power are virtually inoperative now. Meanwhile it is becoming increasingly clear that destructive extremist forces have already emerged and are uniting. Their objectives are no secret. All attempts to "submerge" the treaty beneath various debates over particular points will lead inevitably to new spirals in the exacerbation of the political, economic, and interethnic situation in the country and will finally bring us to the point beyond which the irreversible processes of disintegration could begin. It is terrifying to think what that could mean for people. That is not at all what they expect of us.

Comrade people's deputies! Some time will pass before the signing of the treaty, and a difficult new economic year is approaching. That is why an economic agreement is needed today on preserving the old economic ties and developing new ones for 1991 within the framework of contracts concluded between republics, so as to prevent the stoppage of tens, indeed thousands, of enterprises, with millions of workers and employees, with all the ensuing consequences.

In this connection I would like to express support for the USSR president's efforts to stabilize the country's economic life and reform the structures of executive power. I think we should give M.S. Gorbachev our confidence and support from not only political, but also moral standpoints at this crucial moment which is, in essence, the culminating point of the political and economic crisis. I think every people's deputy should be aware of the full extent of his responsibility to the people and should make his choice in favor of wisdom, realism, and consolidation, and that means in favor of the Union treaty. (Applause) [passage omitted]

A.G. Chekhoyev, *member of the Soviet of Nationalities Commission for Nationalities Policy and Interethnic Relations (Tskhinvalskiy Urban National-Territorial Electoral District, South Ossetian Autonomous Oblast):* Esteemed Congress, esteemed Presidium, esteemed President! As one of the cochairmen of the "Soyuz" deputies' group, I would like to inform you of the views expressed at our general meeting, held on the eve of the present Congress, on the subject of the new Union treaty. It was stipulated that any treaty determines first and foremost its objective, terms, and the parties to it. I would like to acquaint you all with our opinion on these components.

The parties to the treaty. As is clear from statements, a reduction in the number of parties is apparently intended. This is explained in polished speeches and appeals, and there is talk of economic damage and diktat by the center. But let us define our position and say unequivocally that today what divides them from the USSR is not what they declare, but ideological differences.

Now the question of what form our Union will take. A certain tactical error was evidently made here. We did not define it from the outset, and have not yet made it clear to this day: Will it be a federation, a confederation, or a Union of sovereign states?

Yesterday we members of the editorial commission for drafting the resolution on this question were issued with a draft. What do we see there? The word "SSSR" [USSR] is retained, that is, three S's and an R. Only it no longer stands for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, but for the Union of Sovereign Soviet Republics. When I asked why the word "Socialist" had been dropped, a comrade jokingly said that we simply wanted to keep the old name and retain the three S's. But excuse me, we are not doing crosswords here and writing letters in squares, we are preparing to throw out the very essence of our state—the socialist state. The "Soyuz" deputies' group conducted a public opinion poll: 86 percent of those polled replied unequivocally that our state should adhere to the socialist orientation. Neither the commission, nor the congress, nor even the city of Moscow with its nine million inhabitants is entitled to change our orientation. I think we should hold a referendum. We cannot take the responsibility on ourselves. Our own position is unequivocal: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Now the question of whether the new Union treaty will help to resolve today's pressing problems, whether it will help to strengthen our Union. I think it is difficult to give a simple answer to this. The poll showed that 40 percent

expressed a positive view, while 39 percent of those polled expressed doubts. Why? It is clearly a question of the present-day sociopolitical and economic situation in our state—this will largely determine the future of our Union. It would have been a good thing, of course, if at the very outset of perestroyka we had immediately embarked on economic reform and immediately created a model for the country's new economic and management mechanism; in that case these relations would today have largely determined the nature of our Union treaty and determined the level of sovereignization of all the components of the federation. But look what we were offered at the time: economic accountability, the lease system, self-financing, cost recovery, and without even an appropriate mechanism for implementing it all. These things were simply half measures.

That is why the war of powers, if I can put it that way, has broken out today. All the same, the draft new Union treaty that has been submitted for our discussion (this may be rather brutal, but I have to say it) reflects the political considerations of the current moment, rather than taking a long-term view. Certain circles are today raising this question: Will there be this union of sovereign states? Let us speak frankly, can a union of states be a state? In this connection our Union treaty of today must be unambivalent: It cannot be a capitulation of the center to the republics, and in some cases to separatist movements. The concept in question could mean examining the hierarchies of laws and other acts of the Union and republics as they have grown up. If we are moving toward a united state, then in that state (as world practice shows) the law of the Union must take precedence throughout its territory.

I must mention another thing—the most important power. A notorious model was provided by B.N. Yeltsin in his interview, when he said that the Union should have not these powers, but those. I think we must define our position clearly and determine the critical point beyond which our applause must not go if we are to ensure that this is not followed by the downright collapse of the state.

On the first day of the congress a very great impression was made on me by the speech by Roland Bykov, an actor and movie director whom I very much admire, who said that the state must first and foremost ensure human rights and freedom of the individual. In this connection I would like to note that the draft Union treaty is purely declarative when it comes to human rights. In the area of ensuring citizens' rights, Union laws should have absolute supremacy over republic laws. Otherwise we will be putting the fate of the national minorities in the republics' hands. The presumption of innocence does not come into it. Graphic examples of this can be seen in the Baltic republics, Moldova, Georgia. No one knows what is still to come in other republics.

In his very clear and graphic report yesterday, R.N. Nishanov took a courageous step: He finally crossed the line that was always the stumbling block in the discussion of the Union treaty, by touching on the question of who will sign it. While this is not yet clearly stipulated in the draft today, the position of our deputies' group is this: The Union treaty should be signed by all national-territorial state formations, that is, the document in question must be a treaty of not 15, but 53 components of the federation (true, the number is even more than that today). Clearly we must approach this question unequivocally: Indissoluble Union, as it says in our anthem—Union of equals.

The structure of Union organs. I must say that the "Soyuz" group believes unequivocally that the chambers must be formed as they have hitherto been formed, on the same principles. The USSR president must really be the head of the Union state and must be vested with the highest administrative and executive authority.

To sum up, I would like to say that the signing of the Union treaty probably requires us to examine and finally adopt a Declaration on the Sovereignty of the USSR. I also think that for the transitional period, the period of preparation of the Union treaty prior to its signing, the USSR president must exercise all his authority and use all his powers to ensure the operation of our USSR Constitution throughout the country's territory.

I support the proposal of other groups: to hold a referendum on the integrity of the USSR's territory and on defining the political orientation of our state. One more thing. As a representative of the South Ossetian Autonomous Oblast, I wish to give you a brief report. Incidentally, this was mentioned in M.S. Gorbachev's speech and in R.N. Nishanov's speech.

The official mass media have said that our autonomous oblast has been abolished and that a state of emergency has been imposed selectively over the oblast's territory. Today the autonomous oblast has no links with the outside world, and it is quite possible that in the near future there will be an acute shortage of essential goods, medical supplies, and fuel. A confrontation is afoot. But I wish to stress the main thing, that it is not a confrontation between the Georgian and Osset peoples—peoples, I stress. In our shared history and in the current period, there is much more to unite Ossets and Georgians than to divide them. I am firmly convinced that tomorrow the Ossets and Georgians will together condemn everything that is happening today.

But now the situation is deadlocked. According to official reports the Georgian legislative leadership does not intend to engage in talks and does not intend to support the USSR Supreme Soviet's appeal, that is to say, political ways of settling differences are ruled out. In this

situation, with reference to M.S. Gorbachev's speech yesterday, we are certain that in order to avoid the further development of conflict, other ways of resolving the conflict must be found. M.S. Gorbachev spoke about those other ways yesterday, and I think he will get involved actively in resolving this problem. The conflict will be settled. [passage omitted]

P.M. Talanchuk, *rector of the Kiev Polytechnical Institute (Zhovtnevyy Territorial Electoral District, Kiev City):* Esteemed USSR Supreme Soviet Chairman, esteemed People's Deputies! Our peoples' many centuries of common destinies, their common joys and sorrows, the processes of integration that are gaining strength worldwide, the role of the Union in the world community of nations—all this provides grounds for answering this question in the affirmative: Do we need the Union? But the answer to the question of the need to renew and radically transform it is equally unequivocal. We do not propose, to use the esteemed president's well-known expression, to "cut the living tissue." On the contrary, we propose to cut away, to excise, all the dead, decayed tissue.

The fundamental basis of the renewed Union is democratism. For a long time matters were presented as if the democratism of the Union and the equality of the republics consist in their being granted identical rights by the center. The center defined the republics' powers, sometimes widening them (usually only verbally) and sometimes restricting them in practice. This kind of democracy that descends from above is no longer acceptable.

True democratism lies first and foremost in the fact that the parties to the Union treaty are the republics, and the treaty is concluded by them not with the center, but among themselves. Here all the republics are in an identical position. Each of them determines absolutely autonomously the range of powers which it transfers to the Union.

The new Union treaty should reflect not the rights handed down to the republics from above, but the powers of the Union defined collectively by them. The information available in the press indicates that the republics will resolve this question in various ways. The extent of powers that different republics are prepared to vest in the Union varies. Therefore any attempt to find some kind of standard pattern for this is doomed to failure.

Clearly several models could arise for the demarcation of powers between republics and the Union: the first approximating to a federal type of relations, the second approximating to a confederal type, the third something in the nature of associate membership. In view of this, it seems to me, the draft Union treaty must be revised so as to reflect the basic points of each of the three aforementioned models for the demarcation of powers and list which republics choose which model.

The specific content of each of these three models should be defined collectively by the republics that choose the model in question. Clearly at some stage in the preparation of the draft Union treaty it will be necessary to set up three subgroups or subcommissions consisting of the interested republics. In connection with this approach, the definition of the Union as a federal state should be deleted from the draft. What is proposed instead of a federation?

There is certainly no point in playing definition games and trying to reduce the renewed Union to one of the familiar types. Not everything can be "squeezed" into the Procrustean bed of ready-made definitions. It is a question of the formation of a state that is unique in terms of its political and state-legal nature. Therefore Part 2 of Article 1 could begin thus: "The USSR is a sovereign state formed as a result of a voluntary association..." and so on throughout the text of the draft.

In connection with the proposed structure of the Union (it could be called asymmetrical) a new approach is needed to the question of the representation of the republics on the Union organs of power and administration. Will it be fair if all the republics, regardless of their chosen model of relations with the Union, are granted identical representation on those organs? Or will it be more correct if in all the Union organs, metaphorically speaking, the members of the confederation have a consultative seat, and the associate members of the Union have observer status?

Of course, on those organs that control spheres where the powers of all the republics are transferred entirely to the Union, the representation of all the republics should also be identical, but the proposed demarcation applies to those spheres where powers are not transferred to the Union to an equal degree by all the republics. In the light of these proposals it is necessary radically to rework the whole of Section III of the draft Union treaty. These problems must be resolved at the discussion stage. The provision on the transfer of additional Union powers to republics on the basis of a separate agreement is hardly acceptable.

As I have already noted, the Union treaty is concluded by the republics among themselves, and not with the center. Any additional transfer of powers affects the interests of all members of the Union, and these questions must be resolved not separately, but jointly, collectively, democratically by all the republics. In those spheres that are transferred to the Union's jurisdiction, all-Union ownership must evidently be preserved on a considerably smaller scale than at present. The extent of that ownership and the facilities it covers

will naturally not be identical in the different models of "republic-Union" relations. That must be reflected in Article 7.

The recognition of variant models for membership of the Union requires a new approach to the procedure for adopting the Union treaty. It seems that the need to hold a referendum on this question is generally recognized. Apart from the question of "for" or "against" the Union treaty, it will be necessary (given a positive answer to that question, of course) also to submit to referendum the question of which model—federal, confederal, or associate membership—is preferred by the population of each republic. In a number of cases another question will also need to be submitted to referendum.

The draft rightly makes provision for the opportunity for autonomous republics to belong to the Union both directly and as part of Union republics. As you are aware, this refers to autonomous formations that have proclaimed sovereignty. Obviously in the autonomous republics and autonomous formations that have proclaimed sovereignty it should be decided by means of a referendum whether they are to belong to the Union directly or as part of another Union republic. Here discrepancies could arise in the results of the referendum. A union republic comes out against joining, and an existing autonomous republic comes out in favor. Or there could be differences on the question of the model of membership of the Union. While recognizing the full sovereign equality of all the republics, clearly priority should be given to the will expressed by the peoples of the existing autonomous formations. The proposed plan is rather complex and requires serious study. But that is better than putting certain republics off because of the unacceptable rigidity of the Union's structure. That, in my view, is a greater failing of the draft under examination.

The asymmetrical structure (as I propose to call it) of the Union offers the greatest opportunities to express a respectful attitude toward the republics' sovereignty. Their sovereign rights are enshrined in corresponding republican declarations. Incidentally, a recognition of these declarations should be reflected in the Union treaty, preferably in the preamble. That is all the more important in that the rights that the republics delegate to the Union form part of the sovereign rights of the republic, and therefore the sovereignty of the Union is, so to speak, the product of the plenipotentiary power, the sovereignty, of all the republics.

No doubt neither the proposed structure nor any other structure of the Union can be absolutely ideal. Its effectiveness, democratism, and all its other merits and shortcomings will only be revealed in the course of its functioning. It is therefore proposed that the transition to a renewed Union be regarded not as a single action, but as a relatively prolonged process, that a period of transition to the renewed Union be proclaimed, that a preliminary signing of the Union treaty first take place for a term of, for instance, five years, and that on the expiry of that term the treaty be signed definitively. At the end of the transitional period, before finally signing the Union treaty, the parties will be able to refine their positions and make the necessary amendments dictated by five years' experience. Perhaps even go over to a different model of participation in the Union, instead of their initial choice. As you know, even marriages are concluded in stages, the fate of two people is not decided immediately. Here the fates of millions of people are being decided, or, as we say in the Ukraine: Let the beer ferment out. Those are the main considerations of a conceptual nature.

Allow me also to set forth some particular considerations, which relate to individual articles, but are nonetheless important, it seems to me. In Article 3, Section I, it seems to me that it is necessary to give a detailed list of the rights and freedoms guaranteed in the Union and in the republics, including, in particular, observance of the principle of presumption of innocence.

A new article should be incorporated in Section I, devoted to horizontal ties between the republics belonging to the Union.

Article 7, Section I, should indicate additionally that the republics adhere to the principle of defense sufficiency.

Article 1 should make provision for the termination of membership of the Union not only on the initiative of other republics, but also at the expressed will of the population of the republic itself.

Article 7 should make provision for the existence of joint ownership by the USSR and the republics, and also joint ownership by two or more republics.

In Part 2 of Article 8 the Union budget income should be restricted to proportional contributions by the republics, excluding Union taxes and levies.

Articles 10-12 must make provision for the holding of elections to all organs of power on the basis of a proportional representation system.

And finally, the idea set forth in Article 22 needs further development. Clearly, for the republics that have signed the new Union treaty, the 1922 Treaty on the Formation of the USSR loses its force, but the draft says nothing about the republics that have not signed the new Union treaty, yet by all appearances there could be such cases.

The Union treaty should state directly that in the event of negative results of a referendum on the question of signing it, the consequences stipulated in the existing

USSR Law "On the Procedure for Resolving Questions Relating to the Secession of a Union Republic From the USSR" ensue.

Supporting the idea of renewal of the Union, I would like to call on people's deputies at all levels, scientists, and all our public to join actively and creatively in the discussion and nationwide preparation of this most important document.

One last thing. The question of the extent of Union functions is being heatedly discussed here, and certain comrades are worried that there are very few such functions. I will permit myself to remind you that in his last words Lenin, reflecting on the future of the Union and analyzing the experience that then existed, did not remove from the agenda the point that in future, as he said, it would be necessary to reexamine the Union's share, and perhaps leave only two functions under its jurisdiction—the military and diplomatic functions. [passage omitted]

D.D. Venediktov, *chairman of the USSR Union of Societies of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Executive Committee (From the USSR Union of Socities of the Red Cross and Red Crescent):* I represent the Red Cross—a humanitarian and not a political organization, but I consider it necessary to say a few words both to the point and also on procedural and organizational questions. We have all been disturbed by E.A. Shevardnadze's speech and we realize the dramatic import of this step, not just for us, but for the whole world, too. After all it is not simply that just another of the members of the presidential "team" it laying aside his powers. This has attracted the attention of the whole world: Is not the course of our country's foreign policy being shifted, are there not some changes in it? But the resignation statement has been made and the President and the USSR Supreme Soviet are entitled to accept or refuse the resignation; and the congress is entitled to express its attitude to this.

But E.A. Shevardnadze has warned of the threat of dictatorship which has been confirmed by others, too, and this is alarming. He most likely has grounds for talking like that. But whence does this threat emanate—from the right or the left, from the nationalists or the military? Whom does it come from? For we have all concurred about the need to strengthen executive presidential power and the threat of dictatorship is a threat from presidential power or to presidential power. I therefore propose that a commission consisting of deputies be urgently set up to investigate and to report to the congress as to whether grounds exist for alarm, what kind of viewpoints exist on this score, and to hear all the sides out.

But we have no right to forget the main thing—the real threat of civic disturbances, the threat of violence and bloodshed. Therefore the main issues must be resolved in the immediate future for the sake of which we have assembled: ensuring order in the country, ensuring the keeping of the law and of the peace, and providing people with food and essntial goods. Economic rather than administrative levers must be brought into operation for this to bolster the economy so that the economy may cease its collapse and start to develop efficiently.

I should like to recall that the first congress of USSR people's deputies assumed all state power in the country in its entirety and the time has come to answer for this power. We have done a lot, but the slide into the abyss has not yet been halted. It is time to use this power. That is what our task consists of today, and it seems to me that this is one of the questions in whose solution the power proclaimed must be manifested. [passage omitted]

V.I. Goldanskiy, *director of the USSR Academy of Sciences N.N. Semenov Institute of Chemical Physics, chairman of the Soviet Pugwash Committee, Moscow City (From the Soviet Peace Fund conjointly with eight Soviet committees advocating peace, solidarity, and international cooperation):* Comrades, I should like to call upon you to curb you emotions somewhat and to carefully think though what has happened. An event of truly historic significance has occurred. If you turn back to history, I would put this event on a par with the resignation of M.M. Litvinov in 1939 in terms of the repercussions that it could have abroad.

We have seen with what our congress began—with the proposal for a vote of no confidence in our president. I think that if the roll call vote is analyzed, then instead of operating, as is our accepted custom, with the words "someone," this is no longer what we should do. It will become clear, as the saying goes, "who is behind all this [otkuda nogi rastut], who actually is the author of this proposal and who supports it most energetically. At the present time, it is a question of those leaders who have been most vigorously attacked in the press.

Permit me to use the formulations which E.A. Shevardnade cited. He spoke of democrats, conservatives, and reactionaries. Moreover he express complete respect for the conservatives. I also express full respect for the conservatives and I want to say that it a question of those with whom the conservatives will ultimately go along—the democrats or the reactionaries. That is what we are talking about. These attacks in the reactionary press were against M.S. Gorbachev, E.A. Shevardnadze, and A.N. Yakovlev. I am not mentioning N.I. Ryzhkov here because the attacks against him came from all sides. I am talking about those who were attacked precisely from that quarter whose majority was represented in the roll call vote on the first day of our work. A.N. Yakovlev is now no longer in our leading echelon. E.A. Shevardnaze is departing. Next in turn, evidently, will be Mikhail

Sergeyevich, will he not? I would like to caution against this.

I seem to me that the fact that E.A. Shevardnadze has today been forced to resign means one of three things: either no confidence in the foreign policy of President Gorbachev; or, as some people belivee, that in fact E.A. Shevardnadze and A.N. Yakovlev made foreign policy against M.S. Gorbachev's will; or else President Gorbachev's foreign policy is changing. I think that none of these three options must take place. [passage omitted].

S.P. Zalygin, *writer, chief editor of the journal NOVYY MIR, secretary of the USSR Writers' Union, Moscow (deputy from the USSR Writers' Union):* Esteemed presidium, esteemed deputies, something is happening all over our country right now that I would call a conceptual dislocation, a situation in which words are losing their sense. Words which used to have a quite definite meaning—"truth," "mankind," "independence," "spirituality"—have not just lost their meaning but have been distorted, and we are ceasing to understand what now lies behind them.

We are discussing the very specific question of the foreign minister's resignation, which he himself has announced. But in doing so we are straying from the essence of the problem. I cannot agree with my friend, Deputy Adamovich, nor am I entirely in agreement with Deputy Alksnis. We are discussing Comrade Shevardnadze's statement, and at the given moment we should be talking about that fact. I therefore call for the wisest and the shortest proposal, moved here by Academician Likhachev, to be put to the vote. Without any further comment at all.

Chairman: Especially as no one is planning to alter our foreign policy course. Deputy Surkov, please. And after him Deputy Yanayev.

Major General M.S. Surkov, *chief of a troop unit political section, Yerevan (Leninakanskiy-Shirakskiy National Territorial Electoral District, Armenian SSR):* Esteemed comrade deputies, it is easier for me to speak following writer Zalygin's very honest speech. I want to say a few words.

First, for some reason the military theme has been constantly aired—when the Interregional Deputies' Group met during the interval and also in esteemed E.A. Shevardnadze's speech. On behalf of all the military servicemen sitting here I would like to state officially that they were not the ones to bring forward or to raise this problem. If servicemen deputies have spoken, they have done so on their own behalf. As they have every right to do.

Second, I have a great respect for the Georgian people and I know what the concept of honor and dignity means to them. So I cannot share your assurance, esteemed Eduard Amvrosiyevich, that in this complex situation you remain the friend and associate of the president.

Third, the question of whether Comrade Shevardnadze is or is not to be foreign minister has to be decided constitutionally. We have a president, we have a Supreme Soviet. They appointed and confirmed him, and I do not think that we have any reason not to entrust them with deciding what happens now. They will probably demand a report or account from him on the work he has done during his time as minister, and then make a decision. So let my proposal be put to the vote, so as not to complicate the work of the congress in the future.

Last, it has turned out that from the first congress through the fourth I have been engaged in polemics the entire time with people from literature and the arts. I have read many books by esteemed writer Adamovich, but I never thought that he had such a meager store of words. Why does he say "scum," and why precisely "order"? What have we done to make the writers so indignant? We are ready to work with you and cooperate with you, but I earnestly ask the congress and those who turn to us not to forget: We are people's deputies just like everyone else. We are not generals, or colonels, or admirals; we have just one title—USSR people's deputy. I hope that from now on we will treat one another respectfully and correctly and have regard to the dignity of every deputy. (Applause) [passage omitted]

N.P. Kustarev, *forge hand at the "GAZ" Production Association's Gorkiy Automobile Plant (deputy from the CPSU):* Our congress is once again becoming nothing but unspoken allusions: certain people, certain things, some kind of dictatorship. Dictatorship by whom? Let us start talking from this rostrum in concrete terms, naming and revealing all names and all doings.

I am a worker, a forge hand at the Gorkiy Automobile Plant. As I address you I see before me the faces of our workers. What do we ask of our congress; what do we expect of it? We ask only one thing—the establishment of order in our country, and precisely order which is based on the law and which executes the law. When we have established that order, then we will look into the other questions. Yes, we demand the reinforcement precisely of executive power because, much as we may say "All power to the soviets!" (I am for that slogan and principle, too), there always has to be executive power in all civilized states.

I will put it in workers' language: Let us cut this political fooling and political crap and let us get on and work here at the Congress! (Applause) [passage omitted]

E.M. Kafarova, *chairman of the Azerbaijan SSR Supreme Soviet (Shemakhinskiy National-Territorial Electoral District, Azerbaijan SSR):* Esteemed comrade deputies, the USSR in its present form and with the established relationship between the republics and the supreme organs of power and government has unfortunately become a brake on the perestroyka processes. Today the only possible course is for the Union republics to switch to a qualitatively new level of relations guaranteeing them genuine independence and self-sufficiency.

For historical and political reasons the union republics' economies are deeply integrated. This fact by itself militates in favor of preserving the Union. But the whole question is: what kind of Union? A Union of departmental monopolies and bureaucracy, or a Union of free peoples?

The logic of historical development gives us a last chance to create a commonwealth [sodruzhestvo] of sovereign states based on firm interrepublican ties which presuppose the recognition of political, economic, and ethnosocial realities. In this connection I would like to stress that in the future Union all its members must be on equal terms in law, irrespective of their economic potential at the outset and of the current political circumstances.

The constitutional Law on the Sovereignty of Azerbaijan, adopted 23 September 1989, lays down that only an equal unification of sovereign republics can guarantee their free and comprehensive development. A number of fundamental tenets of the draft new Union treaty raise objections because they contradict the Union republics' sovereignty acts. The draft Union treaty must define clearly what common interests of the Union republics the Union is created for, so that a state-legal mechanism for regulating Union relations, the structure of the Union, and the system and procedure for setting up Union organs can be elaborated in a manner adequate to these purposes.

Appraising the treaty from these positions, it can be concluded that the draft is proposing a modernization of the present Union rather than its restructuring. The powers vested in the Union are unjustifiably broad and are in many respects similar to the questions reserved to USSR jurisdiction in the present constitution.

The USSR must not have exclusive powers. The powers of the Union should be understood to mean a competence granted by the republics for their joint conduct, to be implemented by them through the elaboration of mutually advantageous decisions, within the framework of the Union treaty. The actual state-legal character of the Union organs must be reviewed. They can no longer exist in isolation from and standing above the union republics. Otherwise, as reality has demonstrated, a situation will again arise in which the center's decisions are boycotted by the members of the Union.

This approach to the problem of the Union's powers objectively assumes a fundamentally different solution to the questions of the Union organs, their structures, the principles and forms of their organization, and their methods of activity. It is necessary for the interests of every one of the subjects of the Union to be taken into account when decisions are made. (noise in the auditorium). No matter how much noise you make, I am going to continue with my speech.

About Union property. How can we see the Union republics as the owners of state property, apart from that portion of it which is necessary for the USSR to exercise its powers? The point is that a large proportion of the facilities located in the republics are taken out of their management and control. The following provision needs to be written in: Union property in the shared property of all the Union republics; only facilities which operate to serve the Union republics' common interests can fall within their joint, shared ownership.

We must enshrine in legislation the principle according to which the Union budget is formed only from the republics' shared payments, for the implementation of programs in whose joint realization the republics have an interest. There is also a fundamental objection to the provision whereby the republics signing the treaty enter the Union either directly or as part of other republics. Surely it is proclaimed that every republic is a sovereign state.

I would like to express my view of yesterday's speech by the country's president. I do not agree with him as far as the recommendations on the Nagorno-Karabakh problem, which is a painful one for our republic, are concerned. We were expecting a political appraisal of the situation that has taken shape in that region. It is well known whose fault it is that for three years we have been unable to establish order or legality in the oblast or put the constitution of the Azerbaijan SSR into effect. This is being stubbornly resisted by Armenia, which is interfering grossly in our internal affairs. The Armenian Supreme Soviet systematically adopts enactments concerning the political and economic state of the oblast. Matters have reached the point where underground elections to the Armenian Supreme Soviet from the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast [NKAO] have been fabricated on the territory of Azerbaijan, contrary to elementary legal norms and common sense.

We hoped that M.S. Gorbachev would express himself on this matter and use his authority as president of the country to appeal to our neighbors to show responsibility and to dissuade the political adventurists for good from playing with the destinies of ordinary people. Yet again,

however, what is proposed is the hopeless idea of discussing the NKAO problem at a session of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

On behalf of the Azerbaijan people I state again that the NKAO problem is Azerbaijan's problem, and only the people of Azerbaijan are going to solve it. The people trust the leadership, they have not lost faith in the republic Communist Party—the Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet elections show that clearly—and we cherish the people's confidence.

Today we must ask the law-enforcement organs most sternly: Why is the president's decree on disarming the armed formations not being fulfilled in Armenia? Armenia's deputies are not present at our congress, unwilling to discuss the Union treaty and hiding behind the supposed failure to resolve the NKAO problem. There is yet another example of interference in our republic's internal affairs.

A direct result of all these provocations were the tragic events connected with the unprecedented movement of troops into Baku in January 1990, which led to numerous casualties among the peaceful population. A USSR Supreme Soviet 5 March resolution instructed the USSR Prosecutor's Office, Ministry of Internal Affairs, and KGB to investigate all the facts of the crime and to report back to the USSR Supreme Soviet.

A statement by USSR people's deputies from the Azerbaijan SSR distributed at the USSR Supreme Soviet session 10 September 1990 stressed that our republic would take part in the conclusion of the Union treaty on the condition that the security and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan would be guaranteed in the future Union and that violations of our republic's sovereign rights by any other member of the Union would be prevented. The armed aggression and the crimes against Azerbaijan's population must be stopped immediately and excluded hereafter. Every people has the right to be confident of its own security in the future Union. (Applause)

Chairman: Deputy Kugultinov to speak. After him, Deputy Rubiks.

D.N. Kugultinov, *member of the USSR Supreme Soviet (Iki-Burilskiy National-Territorial Electoral District, Kalmyk ASSR [Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic]):* Esteemed Comrades! Why do we need a Union treaty? When I say "we" I mean the peoples of the Soviet Union, all those that form the great power that won the war against Hitlerism—the power that guarantees all of us an opportunity to decide our future here today.

Of course, a Union treaty is necessary. But what kind of Union treaty? Why do we need it if one is needed? I think that all peoples need the Union treaty in order to feel that they have the right not only to life but also to protection for their lives.

The following question then arises: Who will defend us from whom and how? We speak of the center that will coordinate the life of all the Union states, the life of all the peoples. But what is the center? We have not properly grasped the meaning of this word.

I now see the center as something in the nature of a 16th Union republic without a periphery, without a people, and without territory, but like a "black hole" in space that swallows up the interest of all republics yet gives no republic anything of itself. That is how this center appears from statements and speeches delivered by many well-known Union republic leaders. When speaking of the center, they do, after all, realize that the center is always in a circle and when you drag the center out of this circle and place it outside this orbit, someone takes its place. Having taken this place, shots are fired on the 16th republic which seems to encompass the interests of all the other 15 republics.

But this is, after all, utterly wrong. We created the center so that all interests could meet there—focused, as it were, concentrated and combined in one point—and spread to enrich each of the 15 with the wisdom and riches of all the others. So that, on joining this Union, I would be enriched with the wisdom of Likhachev and the mathematical skills of Ryzhov, thanks to whom aircraft take off. Or else how could a poor Kalmyk fly from Elista to Moscow without his own Ryzhov! I can say the same thing about contemporary culture without each of you! We all need one another, we need a center to provide us with things by absorbing things from us.

I am reiterating this idea since I believe it to be important. By taking the center out of each republic's orbit and taking its place, some comrades are pursuing some slightly selfish aims. I do not want to say that they are selfish, I want to be more gentle than that. We are all so filled with spite and feel so much hatred now that I could weep.

A wise man said: "A fool learns from his own mistakes, a wise man learns from other people's." We have to make so many mistakes to learn from our own all the time that we will remain fools all our lives. Let us take a look at past history. Were we really the first and only ones to have a revolution? Remember the Great French Revolution. It was no accident that I mentioned Ryzhov and Likhachev. One is a member of the interregional deputies' group and the other is not. Remember what happened to Marat and to Lavoisier. Men of very great genius: At the age of 30 Marat developed the philosophy of man and his theory of heat, while Lavoisier developed the laws on the preservation of matter that we study in

school. Marat was stabbed to death by Charlotte Corday, while Lavoisier's brilliant head flew off from the guillotine blade.

Yet neither wished France ill, although they stood, as is the case with us now, "on the right" and "on the left." Neither of them wanted any harm to come to France, they wished it well. While wishing it well, they were deprived of life. Have we really reached the point where right-wingers and left-wingers and democrats and radicals are beginning to cut one another's heads off? If not physically then morally, we have already taken Comrade Shevardnadze to the point of committing political suicide. Comrade deputies, I would not like us to go home from here in armor-plated vehicles, otherwise our voters will stone us. The Gorkiy Automobile Plant cannot manufacture armor-plated vehicles for everyone—they have not even managed to produce four armor-plated vehicles.

We must sense our responsibility to our voters. We are not those satisfied people who, having eaten their fill at home, bad-mouth the West's compassion at this microphone for sending parcels. I myself have seen our underfed pensioners and invalids giving thanks for these parcels. They give thanks, yet we, unable to shrug off our arrogance, are saying that they want to humiliate us. They do not want to humiliate us, they want to show us that there are people throughout the world capable of feeling pity and helping and we, too, should ponder this.

We are living in a world where unusual things are happening. It is hard for us to appreciate what is happening now although we are all wise. A poet once said: "You cannot see a face when face to face, but you can see great things from a distance." You do not need a great distance to notice what has happened. I am not afraid of the flood of letters that will pour in. I am not afraid of people saying: Old Kugultinov is toadying to Gorbachev.

I am not afraid of that. Studying the nature of dictatorship, Boethius said: There are three ways for dictatorship to arrive. The first is by birthright (I was born a king!). The second is by conquest (Napoleon). The third is by election. Boethius says: One would think that the man who is elected should be the best, a tolerable one. But, regrettably, as soon as he gets into power he only wants to secure the throne and bequeath it to his successors. We were the first to witness a "king" who received the "throne" through election and donned the "crown," however, and then suddenly begin to divide up his "crown," his "staff," and "scepter." They were divided into 2,500 units and distributed to all of us—the whole body of deputies (I am referring to Comrade Gorbachev). I do not know whether he acted wisely or not, I do not know what he thinks now when even frail female hands are throwing fragments of his staff at him. Thank goodness, they seem to be flying past him.

I think that all peoples, both great and small, should sign and ratify the Union treaty, then we will really be invincible and unassailable, everyone will envy us and we may help all the poor and lonely throughout the world so that they will say about us: "They are good." (Applause) [passage omitted]

V.P. Shcherbakov, *chairman of the All-Union Confederation of USSR Trade Unions, Moscow City (deputy from the USSR trade unions):* To make a correct decision on the question under discussion it is necessary to clearly visualize who in our country is interested in a firm, strong state, who wants to leave the Union, and who wants to transform it into an amorphous conglomeration of semihostile states. In the second and third instances the clearest visible of all are the interests of those politicians who, swept along on the wave of the rebirth of national consciousness, are hankering after power and are readying themselves to become leaders [vozhd] of the people. Politicians receive posts and fame, the attention of the audience, and television screeens. But what do the ordinary working people get from all this? In peacetime they get hundreds of thousands of refugees and growing unemployment, and not because the market has arrived, but because a freight car loaded with raw materials, or loaded with subassemblies from a neighboring republic or neighboring oblast has not arrived.

I recently had occasion to visit Ivanovo—a city which gives the country (the whole country, I want to emphasize) one quarter of its textiles. Yet meat, milk, and butter do not figure in the food coupons of the inhabitants of Ivanovo at all. A half-liter of milk is provided but only for children.

What political motives, what striving for sovereignty of republics, oblasts, or regions can explain this? Surely this is the case not just in Ivanovo? What does the Union treaty give the working man? First of all it is a unified labor market, the opportunity to obtain an education and qualifications, to find work and an application of one's skills in any part of the country. Second, it is a system of economic ties which have taken shape. If we break them up then thousands of enterprises come to a halt and people are thrown out onto the streets. Third, it is a stable raw-material and food base.

Ultimately the present state has been and is being created for over half a century by the common efforts of all the working people of the country. How is this multilayered pie to be divided so as to offend no one? The trade unions of Georgia recently illegally declared all the resorts in the republic to be their own property. Well, it is a land of plenty and resorts can become a good source of income. What about the fact that the trade unions and the entire country invested over the decades about 1.5 billion rubles [R] in the Georgian resorts? This

money is made up of the hard-earned kopeks of all the people of the country. The most important thing is that this money subsumes the hope for health which, for objective reasons, is undermined most of all in the north, in the mines, and at the rolling mills.

I can firmly state: Ordinary working people are in favor of a strong, unified state. Strictly speaking the working people, embodied in the representatives of the 140 million trade union members, have already voiced their desire and their will for unity and their support for the conclusion of a new Union treaty in this hall at the 19th Congress of USSR Trade Unions.

A few considerations concerning the draft Union treaty which has been submitted, I think it can be assessed as a good basis for discussion. At the same time, in our view, the section in it entitled "On Unified Social Guarantees for the Citizen of the USSR" needs to be expanded by adding special social insurance, pensions, all forms of benefits, a guarantee of work and of labor remuneration, and a regimen of labor and leisure. Undoubtedly it is question of a minimum level of social normatives. Each republic or region, proceeding on the basis of its own potentials, can raise these, but it cannot be permitted that a simple change in a persons place of residence can immediately jeopardize his general social condition. We insist that on these and a number of other social issues the negotations between the republics and the center should be conducted with the participation of the trade unions.

The Union treaty must be directed toward the creation of a flourishing country on the basis of a common economic market. But for this to happen it is essential to stabilize the economy in the shortest possible time and to halt all incompetent experiments in this sphere. One example: Surely it was clear straightaway that the introduction of a progressive tax on the growth of earnings undermines the foundations of the economy which lead toward the market? Plant economists realized this straightaway, but esteemed academician Abalkin took 15 months to understand this.

Back at the first congress I spoke about paths for the financial recovery of the economy including monetary reform and the prohibition of the siphoning of state enterprises' non-cash resources into cash resources. But people did not heed this. It is not enough, they declared, that the trade unions are engaging in populism. But now virtually counterfeit money is circulating in the country. Today we have essentially arrived at the total collapse of the financial system. Surely, in order to realise this, we did not have to humiliate and blow the whole country to smithereens? The resolution adopted by the government on holding this process back is not working but instead the printing presses are working and with each passing day the incomes oif the working people are becoming increasingly worthless.

It was noted in the president's report that in nine months wages in the national economy have grown 8.5 percent. But have they grown for everyone? In construction, in the metallurgical complex, and in other sectors this growth has amounted to four to five percent and what does this growth give you if, over the same period, the price of potatoes has increased 16 percent, that of vegetables has increased 27 percent, and the price of fruit has increased 22 percent? On kolkhoz markets in September alone (in September alone, I emphasize) the price of meat has increased 49 percent, eggs by 50 percent, and in subsequent months not by mere pecentage points but several times over.

Montary reform is needed. What will it give? First. It can help halt the process of the devaluation of money. Second—it can localize the shadow ecnomy's circulating capital. Third. The situation today is such that, as the MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS newspaper writes, on the black markets of a number of foreign countries our rubles are now readily being bought up at $3 to $4 per hundred. In this situation it could prove profitable for a number of entrepreneurs to exchange dollars at a superspeculative rate of exchange and keep the rubles they get from this in Soviet commercial backs with the right to the unfetterd use of these. Thus, $30-40 billion which have passed through this criminal piece of chicanery can be transformed into more than R1 trillion (let me recall that the entire residual value of the national production capital today amounts to about R2 trillion). It is easy to imagine that in the course of privatization these foreign billions will determine who will get their the assets of our people.

All this is nothing but the consistent, purposeful, skilled destruction of our national economy. For our country this is a direct path to becoming a raw-material appendage, a sort of social nature reserve of cheap manpower for big transnational monopolies. I appeal to the president with a suggestion that competent organs, including the organs of state security, be immediately assigned the task of carrying out a detailed investigation into this act of veritable economic subversion and to halt the plundering of the country and of the people's assets. Only after instilling elementary order is it possible to set about economic reform and the creation of a union of states on this basis.

Of course, strong presidential power is needed for this. We know Gorbachev as a humanist and democrat. We believe in the sincerity of his aspirations. But now for the ultimate victory of democracy and humanism, the country needs will and action based on the support of the whole people.

I wish most actively to support the idea of holding referendums on how the country is to be organized and on land ownership. The people, and no one else, must

decide how they are to live and in what sort of society. (Applause) [passage omitted]

Press Carries Shevardnadze Resignation Speech

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[Speech by Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze at the 20 December session of the Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses in Moscow: "E.A. Shevardnadze: 'I Resign'." The Moscow Domestic Service version was published in the 20 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 11, column one, under the headline "Resignation Speech to Congress"]

[Text] Comrade deputies: I have perhaps the shortest and the most difficult speech of my life. I did not ask for the floor, but since certain deputies have insisted—the reasons, what it is about, are known to me, why this particular group has insisted on my speaking—I have drawn up the text of such a speech, and I gave it to the secretariat, and the deputies can acquaint themselves with it. What has been done in the sphere of foreign policy by the country's leadership, by the president and the Foreign Ministry, and how the external conditions are shaping up for the development of the country, for the implementation of the plans for our democratization and renewal of the country, for economic development and so on? A certain amount has been done, and this is spoken of in the speech.

I would like to make a short statement, comprising two parts.

Yesterday there were speeches by some comrades—they are our veterans—who raised the question of the need for a declaration to be adopted forbidding the president and the country's leadership from sending troops to the Persian Gulf. That was the approximate content, and this was not the first or the second occasion. There are many such notes and items in the press, on television, and so on.

These speeches yesterday by our comrades overfilled the cup of patience, to put it bluntly. What, after all, is happening with the Persian Gulf? On about 10 occasions both within the country and outside the country's borders I have had to speak and explain the attitude and the policy of the Soviet Union toward this conflict. This policy is serious, well considered, sensible, and in accordance with all standards, present standards, of civilized relations between states. We have friendly relation with the state of Iraq. They have been built up over years. These relations are being preserved, but we have no moral right at all to reconcile ourselves to aggression and the annexation of a small, defenseless country. In that case we would have had to strike through everything that has been done in recent years by all of us, by the whole country, and by the whole of our people in the field of asserting the principles of the new political thinking. This is the first thing.

Second, I have been repeatedly explaining—and Mikhail Sergeyevich spoke of this in his speech at the Supreme Soviet—that the Soviet leadership does not have any plans—I do not know, maybe someone else has some plans, some group—but official bodies, the Defense Ministry—and they are now accusing the foreign minister of having such a plan, a plan to land troops in the Persian Gulf, in that region. I have been explaining and saying that there are no plans like this, they do not exist in practice. Nobody is planning to send even one serviceman in a military uniform, even one representative of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union. This has been stated. But someone needed to raise this issue, this problem again. I know what is happening in the corridors of the congress.

The third issue. I said there and I confirm and state it publicly that if the interest of Soviet people are encroached upon, if just one person suffers—wherever it could happen, in any country, not just in Iraq but in any other country—yes, the Soviet Government, the Soviet country will stand up for the interests of its citizens. I think that deputies should back up, should back up the Soviet leadership in this. But I would like to raise another question. Excuse me, is it all accidental? Is it an accident that two members of the legislature make a statement saying that the minister of internal affairs was removed successfully and the time has come to settle accounts with the foreign minister.

This statement has been circulated literally throughout the world press and in our newspapers. Are they such daredevils, these lads—I will call them that, age permits me to because they are really young, in a colonel's shoulder-straps—to address such statements to a minister, to a member of the government? Look in the newspaper, I will not name a single surname today. What is surprising, and I believe one must think seriously about this: Who stands behind these comrades, and what sort of thing is this? Why does no one deny it and say that this is not so, that there are no such plans? Perhaps there are such plans?

In this connection permit me to say a few words about the personal worth of the man, about his personal sufferings, because many people think that the ministers who sit there or the members of the government or the president or someone else are hired, are being hired and that they can do what they like with them. I think that is impermissible. In this connection I remember the party congress. Was this really a chance phenomenon? Because at the congress a real struggle developed, a most acute struggle, between the reformers and—I will not say conservatives, I respect the conservatives because they have their own views which are acceptable to society—

but the reactionaries, precisely the reactionaries. This battle, it must be stated bluntly, was won with merit by the progressive section, by the progressive members, delegates, by the progressively-minded delegates to the congress. I would like to recall that it was against my will, without being consulted, that my name, I, my candidacy, was included for secret voting, and I had 800 against, 800 delegates voted against. What then: Is this random, or on purpose? Is the policy which the foreign minister conducts not good enough, or am I personally undesirable? This is a serious matter, more than serious. I say that, all the same, this is not a random event. Excuse me, I am now going to recall the Supreme Soviet session. At Comrade Lukyanov's initiative, literally just before the start of the sitting, a serious matter was included on the agenda about the treaties with the German Democratic Republic. As it happened, I was on my travels, and they called in deputies, and people found themselves in a totally stupid position, and the issue was a flop. I myself had to speak the following week. How did it turn out? those same people who are now speaking as the authors came out with serious accusations against the foreign minister, of unilateral concessions, of incompetence, lack of skills, and so on and so forth. Not one person could be found, including the person in the chair, to reply and say simply that this was dishonorable, that this is not the way, not how things are done in civilized states. I find this deeply worrying.

Things went as far as personal insults. I endured that, too. Comrades, a hounding is taking place. I will not name the publications, all manner of publications, the Pamyat society—I add the Pamyat society to these publications—what expressions: Down with the Gorbachev clique! And they also add Shevardnadze and several other names. Who are they, the so-called reformers? I'll put it bluntly, comrades, I was shaken. I was shaken by the events of the first day, of the start of the work of our congress, by the pressing of a button the fate not only of the president but of perestroyka and democratization was decided. Is that normal? Democrats, I'll put it bluntly: comrade democrats, in the widest meaning of this word: You have scattered. The reformers have gone to seed. Dictatorship is coming: I state this with complete responsibility. No one knows what kind of dictatorship this will be and who will come—what kind of dictator—and what the regime will be like.

I want to make the following statement. I am resigning. Let this be—and do not respond and do not curse me—let this be my contribution, if you like, my protest against the onset of dictatorship.

I express profound gratitude to Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev. I am his friend. I am a fellow thinker of his. I have always supported, and will support to the end of my days, the ideas of perestroyka, the ideas of renewal, the ideas of democratization. We have done great things in the international arena. But, I think that it is my duty, as a man, as a citizen, as a Communist; I cannot reconcile myself to the events which are taking place in our country and to the trials which await our people. I nevertheless believe, I believe that the dictatorship will not succeed, that the future belongs to democracy and freedom.

Thank you very much.

Gorbachev on Shevardnadze Resignation

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[Statement by USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev at the Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies at the Kremlin, Moscow on 20 December—recorded. The Moscow Domestic Service and Moscow TASS English versions of this speech were published in the 21 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page seven, column one, under the headline "Gorbachev Speaks on Shevardnadze's Resignation" and the subhead "TASS Carries Gorbachev Speech."]

[Text] I would not like to either oversimply the situation or to dramatize it unduly. The main thing is not to panic, and even more, not to fall into hysteria. And not to stray into accusations that we will be ashamed of tomorrow. A very serious situation has arisen—and this is indeed a culmination—a certain situation has arisen, so to speak, among us, of which we must, after all, try to make sense. Well, above all: We have considered together possible, necessary, and desirable, the speeches of Comrade Ryzhkov, Kryuchkov, and Shevardnadze, and have taken the step of giving them each two time-limits so they could, in this discussion at the congress, expound their assessments and proposals and make their points. So all this has, so to speak, been consonant with the normal process, as we have envisaged it.

I must say that Eduard Amvrosiyevich's announcement of his retirement has come as a surprise to me. Frankly, it is this that wounds me most. My telephone conversations, of which I have had two, do not yet enable me to fully assess the reasons for his decision. We agreed to meet and sit down and talk, discuss it, and I would not dot all the i's now and pass sentence on many points, beginning with the fact that simply to condemn what Shevardnadze has done—I think one needs to give this some thought and I will try to say, at least in two or three words, why. Or whether to ask on the contrary, in spite of and regardless of everything—that it must all be thought over. What he has said here and in his conversations with me—the two phone calls—indicates that Eduard Amvrosiyevich Shevardnadze has decided, by this action, this protest, to move against those who are trying to exploit the difficulties and cast doubt on the policy of perestroyka and the main directions of the struggle for the aims of perestroyka and for the renewal of society.

Since he believes this onslaught has already acquired the nature of a planned onslaught and of continuous attacks, it is necessary to utilize the sharpest methods to thwart the attacks on the implementation of this course and to stop those who want to exploit the acuteness of the situation and to deflect us from our course. Here are his arguments, which he presented briefly here and told me as well, because at the end of the day it is a matter of his private interests.

Nevertheless, I do not share them. I share his position in a sense that we must defend perestroyka—and I have proclaimed this thesis at once as the most important thing, which I see as the task of the present, fourth congress, in that real situation, in which it takes place, when all of us and all society have been brought to the limit, and we must either confirm our choice, or change the course. As a matter of fact that is how the question is posed. Differences in tactical decisions and in the pace of perestroyka are in the final analysis a normal part of life: it is, so to speak, a matter of search coordination and discovery. Then I said that we need to protect this course despite all shortcomings, miscalculations, and mistakes, which have had serious consequences and which must be answered for. I do not avoid the responsibility. But above all, I see that the responsibility should consist of pursuing this course to its logical conclusion, so that it will turn into positive results for our society.

That is why such an action by Comrade Shevardnadze and the way in which he did it—without consulting the president—I personally condemn. I will tell you frankly, if the matter has been brought to such a point, I planned to recommend Comrade Shevardnadze for the post of vice-president. That is what the situation is like. This is just to dot the i's. I have come to this conclusion for a good reason. Here is a man who had made his choice with regard to the fact that we cannot live in this society as we used to. As far back as ten years ago in the well-known situation he came across such forces and entered struggle with them. We knew—and those who were round about, they know it all very well—and we sensed it. While working here and there, he as well as myself came to the same conclusion: even having at our disposal the plenary powers, that we had, we could not manage to really unleash the processes. This required that we would go through all trials and through all heated discussions—they were not made public in those days—for us to arrive at the conclusion that any opportunity should be used to set out to change everything in our society.

So it belongs to these people. Even after everything I have said, I do not want us now, you and I, to say, that is it, we have decided: Shevardnadze is being written off, and this period is already part of history. No, I think we ought to back the view of academician Likhachev, the writer Zalygin, and other comrades, who did not get carried far away in their fantasies, as it were—I cannot put it any other way—and frighten themselves and the whole country, but confined themselves to saying that this event has taken place and that it is by and large a very serious one, and that it merits a response whereby, in a normal atmosphere, the president, Supreme Soviet, and government should get to the bottom of it all, as is fitting, and that they should then come back and report on their proposals and final conclusions. I think we should confine ourselves to that.

I also think this. Of course each of us will play his part. For those of my colleagues who, from the earliest days even before 1985, got involved and made their choice, as it were, now is perhaps the most difficult time. But to leave now is unforgivable, and it must be condemned. We must express the demand that this struggle be continued. But I believe nevertheless that, for all the turns along the way, the policy and the road we have embarked on remain, and we shall proceed along it. This is the main point. Today we must confirm both before our people and the world community our actions at the very first congress, I think it was, when we confirmed the foreign policy course which our state is pursuing and which we have embarked on in the context of improving international relations and in the context of new approaches, which are already yielding fruit for all of our present-day civilization, thereby blazing a trail to a lengthy peaceful period.

We must without doubt do the same thing today urgently, because foreign correspondents are already asking... and academician Goldanskiy has announced options as to what this might mean. Was it a change of policy, he said? And other things. I would support what a worker said. He introduced himself to me, and I have forgotten the name, although we were talking yesterday, he was speaking here. Comrades, let us not mix things up and lump everything together. It is one thing that we can see that our society is in this particular state—political instability, a war of laws, a lack of effectiveness of executive power, and breaks in this chain of executive authority, and so on and so on.

This requires urgent and immediate measures to impose order, to give our society stability, as without these it is impossible to advance the transformations. We have entered onto the critical road for these transformations. That is one matter. I would ask you, so that I do not have to do this at the rostrum, to recall that many dozens of states, when they were at some particular historical point in their development, have passed through such stages. Such transitions have always been accompanied by and required strong power. With kissel [jelly], one can swallow too much of his kissel and even choke on it. I feel that we are faced today with the kissel of our power. This is unacceptable. This prevents us from getting on with things. All the more so when people are under such pressure that they have reached the limits of their patience.

This must be done, and there is no question of any dictatorship here, but rather of a strong power, and this should not be confused because this would be substituting one concept for another. I, as president, today do not possess any information—and I have rather broad information—that would confirm that someone somewhere has prepared a junta for us or some other, so to speak, dictatorship similar to such a junta and so on. No, I do not have such information.

But if we are irresponsible and careless, if we do pay heed to the impulses coming from society and if we let slip the chance to strengthen our power fundamentally and to give it a new dynamism, then such a time could arrive when society will seek a way out using any options. We must also be aware of this. These are the laws of history, so to speak, the lessons of history. Therefore, all of this is interconnected. In this connection I also reject the thesis put forward by Comrade Shevardnadze because it, too, smacks a little of a mood of panic.

So I have discussed this in front of you with complete frankness and I hope that you will support the proposal that was put forward by two deputies, representatives, so to speak, who are patriarchs of our culture. Let us make this decision without going too far in our assumptions and, so to speak, accusations and in ascribing things to our society and country which, so to speak, are not there. All the more, I consider it necessary to repudiate these very emotional descriptions there regarding, individual sections, etc. All this must be withdrawn.

Radio Coverage of 20 Dec Session

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For Moscow Domestic Service recorded coverage of the 20 December session of the Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies, see the 21 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 14, column two.

For speeches by the following deputies see the 24 December Soviet DAILY REPORT:

Stanislav Gurenko, first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee, page 57, column two.

Rizoali Ozhiyev, deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet Committee for Internationalist Soldiers' Affairs, page 59, column two.

Academician Dmitriy Likhachev, page 61, column one.

Deputy Fedor Burlatskiy, page 61, column one.

Deputy Aleksandr Adamovich, page 61, column two.

Alfreds Rubiks, first secretary of the Latvian Communist Party-CPSU Central Committee, page 62, column one.

21 December

Speeches From 21 December Morning Session

PM2312174090 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Dec 90 Union Edition pp 3-4

[Continuation of "Stenographic Record of Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies," this section covers from the start of 21 December morning session through speaker Rakhimov]

[Excerpts]

Ninth Sitting

Kremlin Palace of Congresses, 1000 hours, 21 December 1990.

A.I. Lukyanov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, in the chair. [passage omitted].

V.A. Yavorivskiy, *writer and secretary of the Ukrainian Writers Union Board, Kiev (Minskiy Territorial Electoral Okrug, Kiev):* Esteemed deputies, esteemed voters, esteemed Anatoliy Ivanovich! I represent here the Ukrainian legislature and its Presidium. I therefore want to give the following report. Yesterday two opposing statements were heard from the Ukrainian delegation on the Union treaty. That is natural since the situation that has taken shape reflects the real picture. I am surprised that a very important element was absent from many of my colleagues' speeches, including that made by Comrade Gurenko, leader of the Ukrainian Communist Party. It has been said here that the Ukraine is discussing the concept of the Union treaty both with the people and within the legislature. However, the Ukrainian legislature already voiced its opinion on this issue during the student disturbances last October. I have the text, I will read just two sentences to you. Let the congress take cognizance of this: "Channel all the Ukrainian SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet's efforts into stabilizing the political and economic situation in the republic, building a rule-of-law sovereign state, and adopting a new constitution for the republic; pending this, the conclusion of the Union treaty is considered premature." [passage omitted].

G.S. Tarnavskiy, *Belorussian SSR prosecutor (Slutskiy Territorial Electoral Okrug, Minsk Oblast):* Esteemed People's Deputies, Esteemed President! The turbulent, virtually uncontrollable development of democratization within our country has speeded up the destruction of the very centralized system of management and has considerably undermined the prevailing structure of relations between Union republics and the center. The miscalculations of reform have to a considerable extent

facilitated the increase in social tension and brought about anarchy, arbitrariness, and lawlessness.

Certain union republics had lost faith in the center's ability to stabilize the situation and resolve highly acute socioeconomic problems and left the Union to pursue an independent policy. Varying, frequently even adventurist, ways of escaping from the grave crisis are being proposed. But I think I am not mistaken if I say that the overwhelming majority of the country's population favors preserving the USSR as a genuine union of equal and sovereign republics. Life has shown that in our conditions the policy of demarcation does not bring the country's peoples happiness and prosperity—it causes grief and suffering.

Future generations will not forgive us if we do not restore order in the world—and the way to this lies through mutual understanding and cohesion. The new Union treaty outlined in the draft submitted to the Congress should begin the process of uniting the country. This document must be given its due. It contains a number of fundamentally important approaches to building the Union, serving as a reliable basis for fruitful work on the new Union treaty.

The demarcation of competence between the center and the republics will be the stumbling block in concluding the treaty. It has manifest in the formation of the new union republic supreme soviets, that lost no time in proclaiming declarations of sovereignty. The shortsightedness and haste displayed here obviously require a revision of a number of the provisions within the adopted documents.

Can there, for instance, be a serious discussion about maintaining the defense capability of such a vast country as ours at the proper level if the unified Armed Forces are allowed to be split up into national armies? This idea is only acceptable to those politicians who have firmly embarked on the road of separatism. The proposals regarding the introduction of national currencies and separate finance and credit systems also displayed a lack of constructiveness. If these intentions were realized, the country's single market would be completely eliminated and traditional economic, social, and cultural ties severed.

It is also an unequivocal fact that grave consequences would ensue from the national compartmentalization of such functions as the protection of state security and the country's borders and methods of declaring war and concluding peace.

When analyzing the powers of the Union set out in Article Five of the draft, I am firmly convinced that this is the necessary minimum for a federative state mechanism to function normally. However, the draft contains a number of inaccuracies, vague wordings, and ommissions that allow disparate interpretations of individual provisions. I would like to make some comments on this.

First, the voluntary participation of the parties to the Union treaty is the fundamental principle in concluding the treaty. However, the draft makes no provision for determining the republics' will. I think that Article 1 of the draft treaty should contain a clause that states that entrance of parties to the Union treaty is decided by the results of a referendum held in every Union republic or by other democratic means depending on the wishes of the relevant republic. Nor does the draft treaty include a mechanism for republics to leave the Union.

Second, the procedure for terminating membership in the Union of a republic that violates its commitments under the treaty is not set out clearly. In my view, the Union treaty should enshrine the right of the country's Supreme Soviet and the USSR president to submit to a referendum in a republic that has violated the terms of the treaty and the commitments it has assumed the question of confidence in the Supreme Soviet, the government, or the head of this republic. This would also determine whether the population supports its supreme organ in its disregard for the Union treaty. The procedure for terminating a republic's membership to the Union and the resolution of this question must also be regulated.

Third, despite the fact that, according to Article 18 of the draft, the USSR Prosecutor's Office oversees the execution of USSR legislative acts, this area of activity should, in my view, also be reflected in Article 5 of the draft. I propose that Paragraph 8 of Article 5 be supplemented as follows: "overseeing the performance of USSR legislative acts."

Fourth, the fact that the draft does not contain a mechanism for defending the legal interests of autonomous formations and national minorities is a major shortcoming.

Fifth, Article 14 of the draft on the Council of the Federation is set out in an extremely vague manner. The substance of this norm gives no clear idea of how the Council will work and of the relations it will have with the country's Supreme Soviet, the president, the USSR Government, and also with corresponding supreme organs of power in the republics. It is obviously hardly correct from the legal viewpoint for the Council of the Federation to interfere in any form in the powers of the Congress of USSR People's Deputies or the USSR Supreme Soviet. This question requires considerable further work.

Last, I propose that changes be made to Article 17 insofaras it relates to the USSR Supreme Court. I think

that the powers of the Union's supreme judicial body should be confined to the application of Union legislation alone. The country's Supreme Court cannot be the supreme judicial organ with legal relations regulated by republic legislation.

As for the powers of the USSR Economic Court, they should be outlined in the treaty and confined to the examination of disputes stemming from Union legislation or arising between corporate entities in the Union republics.

Comrades! The formulation of the new Union treaty is indissolubly linked with the dates of its conclusion, which speakers here have frequently mentioned. Appeals are being made today to speed up the signing of the treaty. But would that be a correct step in the prevailing situation and would it be a step toward stabilizing the situation in the country? I think not. The ongoing crisis in establishing republic sovereignty, along with a lack of unity in the views held by the components of the federation on a number of fundamental provisions of the draft, attests that the Union treaty is a question of the future—albeit not the distant future.

Chairman: Deputy Ivanov has the floor. Deputy Opolinskiy is to prepare himself.

K.Ye. Ivanov, *member of the USSR Supreme Soviet (Yakutskiy Severnyy Territorial Electoral Okrug, Yakut ASSR [Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic]):* Esteemed people's deputies, esteemed president! The complex process of shaping the country's political and economic system and the tendencies toward the radical sovereignization of national-territorial formations determine our unequivocal attitude toward the draft Union treaty. I must be blunt and say that a political struggle is under way over the draft Union treaty—a struggle that includes not only national interests but also political aspirations. The opponents of Soviet power and socialist choice immediately reject the treaty's ideas, and their aim is clear: to dismantle the Union. The Union's supporters want to fill the treaty with real substance that reflects the fundamental interests of all republics and peoples.

I, a people's deputy from the Yakutskaya-Sakha Soviet Socialist Republic, express the will of my voters and it is my profound conviction that a new Union is necessary. That is why I support the fundamental provisions of the draft Union treaty. I urge my opponents to comprehensively consider their arguments and measure current feelings against the long-term interests of their republics and peoples. The fate of the Union must be decided once and for all by means of a nationwide referendum and not used as an excuse for ideological polemics and political struggle. A referendum must be held without delay. I completely agree with the proposal made by Deputy Zhuravlev from Belorussia. I think that next January is the most convenient date for holding a referendum especially since we have to adopt a Law on a Referendum at this Congress.

We have attentively studied the draft Union treaty. By and large it can be adopted, and that is quite right. However, the draft does not define with sufficient clarity the principles determining the foundations of the Union treaty. The draft does not correspond with the USSR Supreme Soviet's adopted Law "On the Delimitation of Powers between the USSR and the Components of the Federation." You will remember that the draft recognizes all autonomous entities on an equal basis with union republics as components of the federation. The new document does not stipulate the place of autonomous entities, and people's deputies from these entities cannot under any circumstances agree to that.

All components of the federation, including former and current autonomous entities, must be founders of the USSR. In particular, I do not agree with the opinion held by People's Deputy Gurenko, first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee, who said that only the 15 union republics should conclude the treaty. His claim is at variance with the CPSU's concept on the nationalities question ratified by the 28th Congress (to which, incidentally, Comrade Gurenko was a delegate).

I know that Comrade Khasbulatov will address our congress today. We are aware of his stance, but I would like to believe that this is his personal stance. If he repeats his well-known—one might say, even reactionary—theory from this platform today about not recognizing autonomous territorial-national entities within Russia, we people's deputies elected from Russia will express no confidence in Comrade Khasbulatov.

Wisdom is more necessary in nationalities policy than in any other sphere. But there is no wisdom in a policy that restricts the rights of others. What is more this principle comes from the Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia, signed by the great Lenin in 1917. This historic document is topical today when we have told the whole world that we are renewing our society and building humane democratic socialism founded on respect for civilized traditions and panhuman values.

The people, comprising all the nationalities of a given republic, are the main repository of sovereignty. Therefore fears that recognizing the sovereignty of former autonomous entities will result in the disintegration of union republics are groundless. In particular, while declaring itself a component of the USSR and remaining part of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic], the Yakutskaya-Sakha SSR considers itself an inalienable part of Russia and links its historical future with it, including worries and hopes.

Esteemed people's deputies! I want to draw your attention to the position of the small peoples of the North. They are virtual outcasts [izgoy] on their historical lands today. They comprise one to three percent of the population where they now live. They are estranged from real participation in organs of power.

I propose that we find a means of including the interests of the small peoples of the North in the text of the Union treaty and a mechanism for ensuring their representatives' guaranteed participation in all the territory management structures and organs of power. These proposals fully accord with the provisions of the international Convention on the indigenous and other population leading a tribal lifestyle.

Comrades! We are on the verge of asserting peoples' legal equality. But there is, unfortunately, a vast gulf between legal and de facto equality at the start of the implementation of the new Union treaty. This is obvious from the indicators relating to the population's standard of living and the socioeconomic development of the Far North, Eastern Siberia, and the Far East, which are the lowest in the country. Despite the fact that the region is considered a "hard-currency producer"—the main supplier of raw material resources for the whole country, including for the Baltic, the Ukraine, Moldova, and the Transcaucasus.

While supporting the speech made by People's Deputy Angapov, I propose that Article 5 should provide for the creation of a special fund to stimulate the social development of the aforementioned regions. This problem, Comrades, should not be the concern of Russia alone. It is appropriate here to recall the saying that one good turn deserves another.

I agree with those people's deputies expressing the opinion espoused by most Soviet people that our country's name should be preserved, also that the socialist nature of our state should be enshrined. If one of the components of the federation objects and insists on capitalist choice, the name might be amended after a referendum.

I back the proposal to supplement the draft with another principle for the formation and development of a humane, democratic society: All components of the federation ensure the free development and protection of all forms of ownership, methods of economic activity, and foreign economic agreements. This will confirm our socialist choice and will at the same time open the way to market relations, mixed economic activity, and national and civil accord.

Lastly, a word about the date for the signing of the treaty. I think that it will considerably complicate the creation of a renewed union if this date is delayed. In my view, the reference that the Union treaty should not be signed before the republics adopt their constitutions is unfounded. On the contrary, it is my profound conviction that republic constitutions should reflect the provisions of the Union treaty. I propose that we immediately embark on finalizing and concluding the Union treaty. The finalized text should be put on the table in January after the referendum and the subjects of the federation who have already determined their position can begin to conclude the treaty.

Esteemed people's deputies! It is with a sense of pain and alarm for the future of our multiethnic state, for the happiness and prosperity of the peoples, that I urge you to remember the unifying origins of our complex and dramatic history, embark on renewing the Union together, and do all you can to promote the adoption of a treaty based on the voluntary will of our peoples. [passage omitted].

E.Kh. Gukasov, *first deputy chairman of the Kazakh SSR Council of Ministers (Saryagachskiy National-Territorial Electoral District, Kazakh SSR):* Esteemed comrade deputies! To formulate in brief the whole group of questions we have discussed in recent days, one could say that it is a question of a protracted crisis of power, connected to a crisis of state administration.

Obviously one of the main causes of this crisis is the absence until now of a new Union treaty. The drafting of this treaty has been dragged out excessively. What is happening here? In our view there are two reasons for this. First, the side that represents the Union seeks to preserve in the treaty the centripetal trends that have developed in our administrative system, and as a result to ensure that it is a treaty concluded between sovereign states only formally. You will agree that we have seen all this before, and the conclusion of such a treaty simply cannot happen. Attempts to organize the Union "from above" will not produce positive results, since the very idea is obsolete and is not accepted by anyone.

Second, certain republics are declaring their disagreement with the idea of entering into a Union treaty at all, but the country's leadership thinks that without them the Union cannot exist, and tries with all its might to persuade them to sign the treaty. But time is passing, and the lack of a renewed Union treaty is increasingly affecting the deteriorating situation and the development of crisis phenomena in the country.

Esteemed comrades! Multiethnic Kazakhstan is a republic whose interests fit in fully with the Union treaty. We cannot conceive of any other existence than a shared existence with the other republics within the USSR. The examination of the draft Union treaty at the

republic Supreme Soviet session again confirmed this. At the same time we think that if the Union treaty is not to cause further disputes, it should be reworked urgently on the basis of the principles of recognition of the republics' sovereignty. I will try to express in detail our ideas on the main points of the latest version of the treaty.

First, it is very important to add to the treaty a provision on the republics' right, without coordination with the Union, to establish among themselves autonomous interstate, legal, economic, and other relations that do not run counter to the substance of the Union treaty.

Second, the section on the demarcation of powers between the Union and the republics should specify the Union's exclusive powers and the powers it exercises jointly with the republics. The Union's exclusive powers, in our opinion, should include the adoption of the Constitution, amendments and additions to it, the organization of defense, the protection of the Union's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the implementation of foreign policy. All other powers of the Union, including that of defining the border, should be exercised by it jointly with the republics.

In our view it is impossible to agree to hand over to the Union's exclusive jurisdiction the formulation of foreign policy and the conclusion of international treaties, since these questions concern the republics' interests and should be decided jointly with them. The regulation of the USSR's foreign economic activity should also take place with participation by the republics as equals, while the degree of coordination of the sovereign republics' foreign relations should be clearly defined. The present formula is written from the center's standpoint.

We believe that the republics should participate in licensing products for export and issuing quotas for them. How can we agree with the existing provision, whereby since the president's decree of 2 November 1990 the republic's enterprises get only 17 percent of the currency received for supplying products for export, while only two percent of the currency revenue is placed at the disposal of soviets at all levels, including the Council of Ministers?

A particular word about the implementation of an integrated financial, credit, and monetary policy. In our view these questions must not be placed under the Union's exclusive jurisdiction, since they largely determine the economic base of the republics' sovereignty. We believe that financial, credit, and monetary policy should be implemented by the Union in coordination with the republics. This will be a reliable guarantee of the autonomy of the sovereign states belonging to the Union.

Questions of ownership are the subject of a special article in the draft. It stipulates that republics are the owners of the land, mineral resources, and other natural resources in their territory. We believe that in addition to that, the republics should have exclusive ownership of the peoples' cultural and historical assets, all the economic, scientific, and technical potential, all the national wealth that exists on a republic's territory. If the utilization of a particular element of state property located on a republic's territory is necessary to the exercise of the Union's powers, this should be specified in a special agreement or treaty between the republics and the Union.

At present the USSR Government arbitrarily delegates the right to manage the property of enterprises and organizations under Union jurisdiction to USSR ministries, and they are being transformed into various concerns, associations, and other forms of sector monopoly. What is essentially a destructive, undemocratic process is thereby stimulated. Of course, we cannot agree to that kind of approach.

Esteemed comrade deputies! Despite the comparatively substantial disagreements that exist as of today between us and the center in connection with the draft Union treaty under consideration, points of contact could be found on each of the questions at issue and an accord could be achieved in a very short time, given the will. We believe that work on the Union treaty should be placed in the hands of the USSR president together with the top leaders of those republics that agree in principle to join the Union. They should find mutually acceptable solutions to the disagreements that exist, and the treaty should be adopted in the near future. As for those republics that refuse in principle to join the Union, let them stay outside the treaty, with all the ensuing consequences. Further delay is impermissible, it is fraught with the risk of exacerbating the crisis situation.

One last thing. As for M.S. Gorbachev's proposal to hold a nationwide referendum in all the republics on this question, I think such a referendum should be held urgently, but only in those republics where there are substantial disagreements between the Supreme Soviet and the population on this score.

Chairman: Deputy Rakhimov has the floor. Deputy Tetenov should prepare himself.

M.G. Rakhimov, *chairman of the Bashkir ASSR Supreme Soviet (Ordzhonikidzevskiy Territorial Electoral District, Bashkir ASSR):* Esteemed people's deputies, esteemed chairman, esteemed president! Allow me to put forward our attitude to the Union treaty and some comments on the draft.

The draft treaty is being discussed widely in Bashkiria and different views are being expressed, but in general the peoples of our republic regard this document as a serious step toward reforming the country's national-state structure. We see the Union treaty as the only

possible democratic means today of resolving the many accumulated problems of national-state building. In our opinion the entire treaty process must be speeded up. Everyone must realize that further delay in concluding the Union treaty is directly damaging both to the Union as a whole and to many republics.

The draft Union treaty has, in our view, a number of virtues. I will mention a few of them. First, the authors of the draft have sought to take into account the declarations of state sovereignty adopted in Union and autonomous republics. It could be argued that not all these documents have been taken into account, but it cannot be denied that the draft envisages real transformations of the former, in effect unitary, multiethnic state into a Union of Sovereign Soviet Republics.

The draft is open for further improvement. This means we must all do further work on it. If, of course, we want a real, functioning Union of Republics.

The main idea of the draft merits full support—the transition to treaty-based relations among the republics in our country. At long last everything is being turned right way up. For a voluntary Union of Republics, there can be no other approach.

The transition to treaty relations is perhaps particularly important for Bashkiria. As is known, the Bashkir Republic emerged in 1918 as the result of talks on the basis of the 20 March 1919 agreement between the central Soviet authorities and the Bashkir Government. Throughout the decades attempts have been made to erase the treaty-based nature of our republic's relations with Russia from our awareness. The draft Union treaty restores historical justice with respect to us. This is why we support this draft so actively.

Let me add the following: We remember that in 1919, during the conclusion of the agreement with the RSFSR, Bashkiria was in fact the prototype of the current Union republics and had only one leadership structure above it—RSFSR organs of power and administration. But in 1922, when the USSR was formed, yet another structure appeared—USSR organs of power and administration. As a result our republic's level of independence declined by one order of magnitude. The treaty-based nature of our relations with the center had already become selective.

Even in its present form the treaty substantially strengthens the republics' economic independence. In seeking economic independence Bashkiria is striving to overcome the unconcealed arbitrariness of the administrative command system on the republic's territory. The arbitrariness of not only USSR but also RSFSR ministries and departments led to the exhaustion of Bashkiria's underground natural resources and brought nature and the population to the brink of ecological disaster. It also became the cause of the deformed, one-sided development of Bashkiria's economy.

A republic with a 4-million-strong population was literally left bereft in terms of the strengthening of its territorial economy. Bashkiria, which has fixed capital worth more than 25 billion rubles, ranks between 60th and 70th in the Russian Federation in terms of basic indicators of social, cultural, and everyday amenities development, as an analysis carried out on the instructions of Russian head of government Comrade Silayev showed. What a striking disparity between the republic's labor contribution to the "common kitty" and the share received in return!

This is typical not only for Bashkiria. This was the result of the policy of dividing republics into Union and autonomous republics, a policy which for years was applauded. We believe that the policy of dividing republics into first- and second-rate republics is obsolete. It must be replaced by a policy of equality of all republics. The draft treaty takes a big step in this direction. As for the present-day situation, we regard the preservation and consolidation of multilateral economic ties at Union level as the only chance for keeping afloat during the present crisis.

Fourth, the draft treaty recognizes all sovereign republics as components of the Union and draws no distinction between Union republics and what used to be autonomous republics. This kind of position vis-a-vis the components of the USSR is in keeping with the latest Union enactments, particularly the USSR law "On the Delimitation of Powers Between the USSR and the Components of the Federation." I consider it necessary to state this from this lofty rostrum since there are people who would like the former autonomous republics to be recognized as independent components of the Union.

Fifth, the draft also resolves correctly the question of the correlationship between USSR and republic laws. It accepts the idea that a republic's constitution and laws are paramount throughout its territory on all questions with the exception of those that are delegated to the Union. The establishment of this principle opens the way to ending the "war" of laws between the Union and the republics.

The "war" of laws has placed our republic in a grave situation. The Russian Federation, for example, is ignoring the package of USSR laws in the field of the country's national-territorial makeup. Yet these laws did more for our republics than has been done in the last 50 years. This is to the undisputed credit of the present membership of the USSR Supreme Soviet. For the firm time the supreme legislative organ of power has begun to treat us as really independent Soviet states. So how can people demand of us that we not comply with these laws?

I would like for the Russian legislature not to push us into confrontation with the Union, especially since such confrontation is not in our peoples' interests.

Sixth, we have a number of specific remarks to make on the draft treaty. We will convey them to the preparatory commission. Let me just talk about a few of them. First, Article 1 of the draft. Part 2 of this article states that republics become part of the Union either directly or as part of other republics, which does not infringe their rights or release them from their treaty commitments under treaties. A correct interpretation of this norm would seem to be fundamentally important. In our view, the right to chose the mode and path by which a republic becomes part of the Union belongs to the republic itself and is implemented by it voluntarily. Some republics' attempts to impose their will on others in the choice of form for becoming part of the Union must be rejected right here at the Congress of People's Deputies.

In accordance with its declaration of state sovereignty, the Bashkir SSR intends to join the Union directly and independently and to sign the new Union treaty. We consider that the latest Union legislation enables us to be a full-fledged component of the renewed Union.

This in no way means that we intend to sever relations with Russia or enter into confrontation with it. We have been together for centuries and are ready to go on together on the basis of mutual respect and equal treaty-based relations, that is, we advocate an approach to us that is the same as the approach that Russia itself demands from the Union center. In other words, we want to restore our treaty relations with Russia to the way this was envisaged by the 20 March 1919 agreement between the central Soviet authorities and the Bashkir Government. We also take a serious attitude to the preparations for the conclusion of a new treaty with Russia. Russia is currently concluding treaties with Union republics. The time has probably come for its leaders to turn their gaze inward, toward the Russian Federation. Our peoples well remember B.N. Yeltsin's statements on this in Tataria and Bashkiria during the summer.

Furthermore, the only time the term "union republic" is used is in Article 15 of this section. This term is not used in other articles. In this instance too it is more logical to talk about all sovereign republics.

The document's title should also be pondered. Would it not be better to call it not the Union treaty but the Treaty on the Union of Sovereign Socialist Republics? The draft's present title still smacks of lack of respect toward the republics.

In conclusion I would like to talk about how our future work should be organized. The Congress' decision on this question must be businesslike and aimed at completing all the work within a definite deadline. So we don't also "talk into oblivion" the question of the Union treaty, too. It is therefore important to galvanize the Editorial Commission's work to prepare the draft treaty and include on the commission representatives of all the sovereign republics—the future parties to the treaty.

Radio Coverage of 21 Dec Sessions

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For Moscow Domestic Service recorded coverage of the 21 December session of the Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies, see the 24 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 37, column one.
For the speech by Rafik Nishanov, first secretary of the Uzbek Communist Party Central Committee, see the 24 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 44, column two.